
IMPRIMATUR,

Sam. Parker, *Reverendissimo*
in Christo Patri ac Domino
Domino Gilberto Archiep.
Cantuar. à Sac. Dom.

Ex Ædibus Lambeth.
Sept. 12. 1672.

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Learn of me Math 11:29

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and on Printed for R. Chiswell at the Rose & Crown in St Pauls Churchyard

syndus
miserabilis
dum



B-12-7

Primitive Christianity:
OR, THE
RELIGION
C. 12 7 OF THE
Ancient Christians
In the first Ages
OF THE
G O S P E L.

In Three Parts.

By *WILLIAM CAVE*, D.D.

Ὅχι ἐν λόγοις. ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας θεοῦ χάριτος
πράγματα. Just. Mart. Paraneſ. ad Græc. p. 33.
Nos non habitu Sapientiam, ſed mente præferimus:
Non eloquimur magna, ſed vivimus.

Minuc. Fæl. Diſt. p. 31.

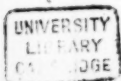
The Fourth Edition.

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. H. for R. Chiſwel, at the
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Yard. M.DC.LXXXII.



2209:82



TO THE
Right Reverend Father in
G O D,
NATHANAEL

Lord Bishop of
O X F O R D,
And Clerk of the Closet to
HIS MAJESTY.

My Lord,

WHEN I first designed that
these Papers should take San-
ctuary at your Lordships Pa-
tronage, the Hebrew Proverb pre-
sently came into my Mind, Keep close
to a Great Man, and Men will re-
verence thee. I knew no better way

דבוק
לשחון
ישחון
77
Bereisch.
Rab. ca. 17.
ap. Druf. A-
dag. Ebra-
ic. Decur. 6.
Adag. 8.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

(next to the Innocency, and, if it may be, Usefulness of the Subject I have undertaken) to secure my self from the Censures of Envy and ill Nature, than by putting my self under your Protection, whose known *εὐφροσύνη*, the Sweetness and Obligingness of whose Temper, is able to render Malice it self candid and favourable. Encouraged also by this Consideration, I hardened my self into the Confidence of this Address, which I had not otherwise attempted, but that your Lordships Kindness and Generous Compassion, and the mighty Condescension wherewith you were always pleased to treat me, (while I had the Happiness of your Lordships Neighbourhood) did at once invite and oblige me to it. I say no more, lest I should affront that Modesty that is so innate to your Temper, or come within the least suspicion of Flattery, so repugnant to my own.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

One thing onely there is, which I cannot but remark, the great Honour which your Lordship has done, not to the Episcopal onely, but to the whole Ministerial Order, that a Person of your Rank and Education would stoop to an Imployment so little valued and regarded in this Unthankful and Degenerate Age. And herein your Lordship has been a happy Precedent; your Example being already followed by some, and will shortly by more, Persons of Noble Descent and Pedigree: a thing for which the Church of England was never more Renowned since the Reformation, than it is at this Day.

My Lord,

There was a Time within the compass of our Memory, when the Bishops amongst other things were accused (by one of the House of Peers, though one that had not the most reason to bring in a Charge of that nature) to be in

Church
Hist. lib. II.
p. 183.

re-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

respect of their Parentage, De face Populi, of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People; (*Malice will play at small games rather than not at all.*) A Charge as false as it was spiteful: though, had it been true, it had been impertinent, seeing the very Order is enough to derive Honour upon the Person, even when he cannot (as your Lordship) bring it along with him. And indeed, so Honourable an Order has Episcopacy ever been accounted, even when there have been no visible Advantages either of Riches or Grandeur to attend it, (as there were not in the more early Ages of Christianity) that Persons of the greatest Birth and Fortunes have not thought it below them to exchange the Civil Tribunal for the Bishops Throne, and to lay down the publick Rods and Axes, to take up the Crosier, and the Pedum Pastorale. If we may credit that Catalogue of the Bishops of Constantino-
ple,

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ple, recorded by Nicephorus, we find Dometius Brother to the Emperour Probus, and after him his two Sons, Probus and Metrophanes, successive-ly sitting in that Chair; as afterwards, Nectarius, S. Chrysostoms Predecessor, was of a Senator made Bishop of that See. Thalassus became Bishop of Cæsarea when he was a Senator, the Præfectus Prætorio (or the Emperours Lieutenant, one of the highest Places both of Trust and Honour in the Roman Empire) of Illyricum, and rising to greater Dignities, being designed by the Emperor for the Government of the East. S. Ambrose (whose Father was an Illustrious Person, the Præfect of France) was made Governour of Liguria and Æmelia, and sent thither with Consular Power and Dignity; during which Imployment he was made Bishop of Milan. Petronius Bishop of Bononia is said to have been first a Præfectus Præ-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Prætorio, and to descend of the Family of Constantine the Great. Sidonius Apollinaris, descended for many Generations of Noble and Illustrious Parents, his Father the Præfectus Prætorio of Gaul, himself Son-in-Law to Avitus, (a Person of Extraordinary Honour and Imployment, and afterwards Consul and Emperour) and yet in the midst of this disdained not to become Bishop of Clermont in France. More such Instances I could give, not to speak of Multitudes that were in the middle and later Ages of the Church, especially in our own Nation. But I return.

My Lord,

I beheld Religion generally laid waste, and Christianity ready to draw its last Breath, stifled and oppressed with the Vices and Impieties of a Debauched and Profligate Age: to contribute towards the Recovery whereof,
and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

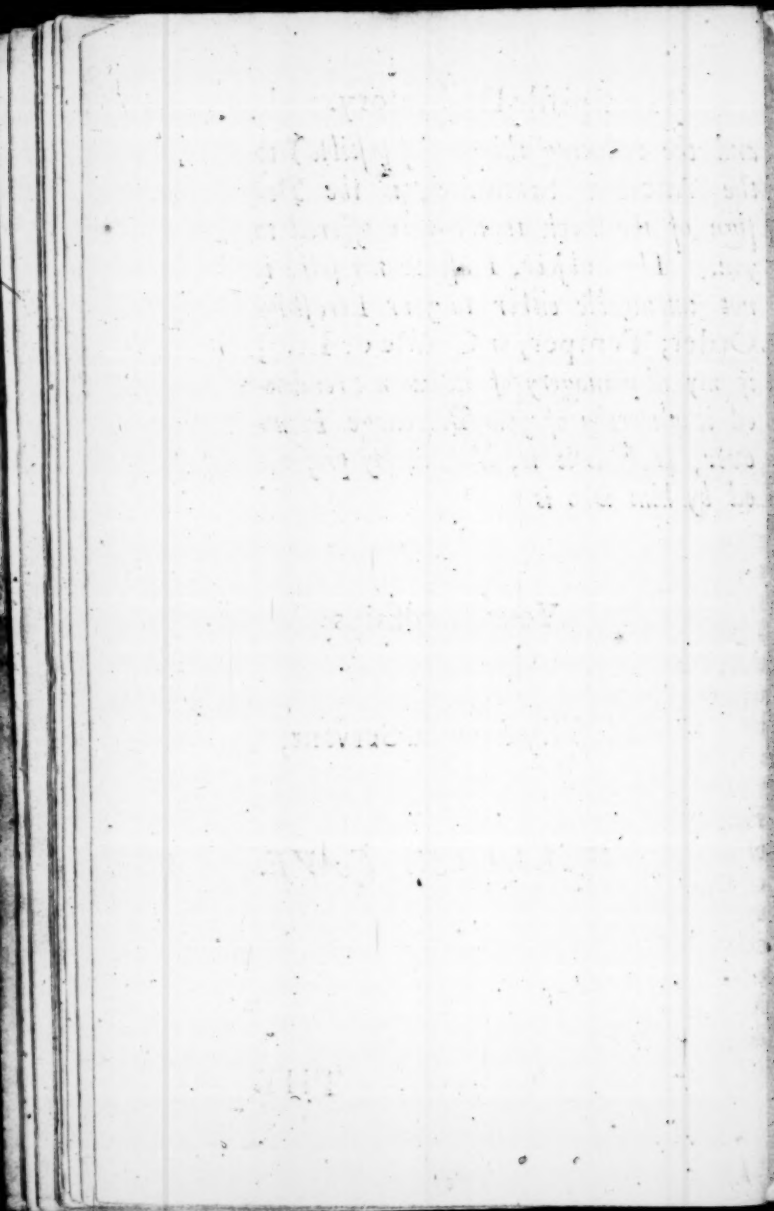
and the reducing things (if possible) to the Ancient Standard, is the Design of the Book that is here offered to you. The Subject, I assure my self, is not unsuitable either to your Lordships Order, Temper, or Course of Life; if my ill managery of it has not rendered it unworthy of your Patronage. However, such as it is, it's humbly presented by him who is

Your Lordships

faithfully devoted Servant,

WILLIAM CAVE.

THE



THE
PREFACE
TO THE
READER.

I Know not whether it may be any satisfaction to the Curiosity of the Reader, to understand the Birth and Original of these *Papers* ; if it be, let him take this Account. No sooner did I arrive at Years of capable Discerning, but I began to inquire into the Grounds of that Religion into which I had been baptized ; which I soon found to be so Noble and Excellent, in all its *Laws* so Just and Rational, in all its *Designs* so Divine and Heavenly, so Perfective of the *Principles*, so Conducive to the *happiness* of Humane Nature, a Religion so *worthy* of God, so *advantageous* to Man, built upon such firm and uncontroulable Evidence, back'd with such proper and powerful Arguments, that I was presently convinc'd of the Divinity that resided in it, and concluded with my self,
(and

The Preface.

(and I thought I had reason so to do) that surely the Disciples of this Religion must needs be the most Excellent persons in the World. But alas! a few years Experience of the World let me see, that this was the Conclusion of one that had convers'd only with Books, and the Reasonings of his own Mind. I had not been long an Observer of the Manners of Men, but I found them generally so Debauched and Vitious, so Corrupt and Contrary to the Rules of this Holy Religion, that if a modest and honest *Heathen* was to estimate Christianity by the Lives of its Professors, he would certainly proscribe it as the vilest Religion in the World. Being offended hereat, I resolv'd to *stand in the ways and see, and enquire for the good old way, the Paths wherein the Ancient Christians walk'd.* For I could not think that this had always been the unhappy fate and portion of Christianity; and that if the Footsteps of true Christian Piety and Simplicity were any where to be found, it must be in those Times, *When* (as *S. Hierom* notes) *the Blood of Christ was yet warm in the breasts of Christians, and the Faith and Spirit of Religion more brisk and vigorous.*

*Quando
Domini no-
stri adhuc
calebat cru-
or, & ser-
vebat recens
in credenti-
bus fides.
Hier. ad
Demet. p.
68. tom. I.*

In pursuance of this Design I set my
self

The Preface.

self to a more close and diligent reading of the first Fathers and Ancient Monuments of the Church than ever I had done before, especially for the *three* or *four first Centuries*, for much lower I did not intend to go, because the Life and Spirit of Christianity did then visibly decline apace; nothing as I went along whatever contributed to my satisfaction in this Affair. Had I consulted my own ease and quiet, I might have gone a nearer way to work, and have taken up with what I could have pick'd up of this nature in *Baronius*, the *Centuries*, &c. But I could not satisfy my self (and I presume it would as little have satisfied the Reader) with shreds, with things taken upon trust and borrowed at the second hand. For the same reason I made little use of *The Lives of the Saints*, (especially in such Instances whereof there was the least cause to doubt) and the Spurious and Suppositious Writings of the Fathers, seldom making use of any but such as are of unquestionable Credit and Authority. And because the Testimony of an Enemy is ever accounted of great moment and regard, I have been careful to adde the Testimonies that have been given to Christians and to
a their

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their Religion by the known and professed Adversaries of the Christian Faith; such as *Pliny, Lucian, Porphyry, Julian, &c.* more whereof we might have been furnished with, had those Writings of theirs against the Christian Religion been extant, which the Zeal of the first Christian Princes industriously banished out of the World. What other Authors of later Date I have borrowed any light from in this Discourse, I have faithfully produced in the Margin. Two Books indeed I met with, which at first sight I well hoped would have wholly saved me the labour of this Search; the one

A modest Discourse of the Piety, Charity, and Policy of elder Times and Christians, &c. By Edw. Waterhouse, Esq; London, 1655.

Paganin. Gaudentius de vita Christianorum ante tempora Constantini. Florent. 1639. quarto.

written by a Person of our own Nation; the other by a *Florentine* of great name and note; but my hopes were very much frustrated in both. For the first, I no sooner looked into it, but found my self wretchedly imposed

upon by the Title, his *elder times and Christians* (not to say any thing of his intermixtures of things nothing to his purpose) seldom reaching any higher than the *middle ages* of the Church, little or nothing being remark'd of the *first*

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first ages of Christianity, the only thing I aimed at. For the other (which I met not with till I had almost finished this Search) I found it miserably thin and empty, containing little else but short Glosses upon some few Passages out of *Tertullian*, from whence I did not enrich my self with any one Observation, which I had not made before. There is indeed an Epistle of *Fronto's*, the Learned Chancellor of the *University of Paris*, concerning this Affair; but it contains only some generall Intimations, and seems to have been designed by him (as appears from that and some other of his Epistles) as the ground-work of a larger and more particular Discourse. But his Death happening some few years after the date of that Epistle, cut of all hopes of prosecuting so Excellent a Design. (These) are all that I know of, who have attempted any thing in this subject, none whereof comming up to the Curiosity of my Design, I was forced to resume the task I had undertaken, and to go on with it through those Ancient Writers of the Church; the result of which Search is laid together in this Book.

Whether I have discharged my self herein to the satisfaction of the Reader,

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I know not ; sure I am, I have endeavoured what I propounded to my self, viz. *A Specimen of Primitive Christianity*, in some of the most considerable Branches and Instances of Religion. Here he will find a *Piety* Active and Zealous, shining through the blackest Clouds of Malice and Cruelty ; afflicted *Innocence* triumphant, notwithstanding all the powerful or politick Attempts of Men or Devils ; a *Patience* unconquerable under the biggest Persecutions ; a *charity* truly *Catholick* and unlimited ; a *simplicity* and upright Carriage in all Transactions ; a *sobriety* and *temperance* remarkable to the admiration of their Enemies ; and in short, he will here see the Divine and Holy precepts of the Christian Religion drawn down into action, and the most Excellent *genius* and Spirit of the Gospel breathing in the Hearts and Lives of these Good Old Christians. Here he will find a real and evident Confutation of that senseless and absurd *calumny* that was fastned upon Christianity, as if it required no more then an *easie* and *credulous* Temper of Mind ; as if under a pretence of Kindness and indulgence to Sinners, it ministred to all Vice and Wickedness. *Celsus* confidently begins the

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the Charge. *There be some amongst the Christians* (says he) *that will neither give nor receive a Reason of their Faith, who are wont to cry out, Don't examine, but believe; and, Thy Faith will save thee; The Wisdom of this World is evil, but Foolishness good and useful.* Julian carries on the

Charge somewhat higher, as if the Christian Religion were not onely content with a naked and an empty Faith, but gave encouragement to sin, by assuring its most desperate *Profelytes* of an easie Pardon. In the conclusion of his *Cæsars*, after he had assigned the *Roman Emperours* their particular *Tutelar Deities*, he delivers over *Constantine* the Great, the first Christian Emperour, to the *Goddeſs of Pleasure*, who having effeminately trick'd and dress'd him up, brought him to the *Goddeſs Aſotia*, or Intemperance, where he finds τὸν υἱόν, *his Son, Constantius*, probably, (for the Passage is a little disturbed and obscure, for which reason probably the Translator passed it by, and took no notice of it) making this

Φησὶ δὲ πᾶς μὲν βέλ-
λους διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν
λόγον περὶ ὧν πισύουσ,
χρησθαι τῷ μὴ ἐξέταξε,
ἀλλὰ πισύουσ· Καὶ, ἡ πί-
στις σε σώζει σε. Καὶ, κα-
κὸν ἢ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ σοφία,
ἀγαθὸν δ' ἡ μωρία.

Orig. adv. Cels. lib. I. p. 8.
vid. lib. 6. p. 282.

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Ὅστις φθορεύς, ὅστις μαφόν-
 υθ, ὅστις ἐυαγῆς καὶ βδε-
 λιοῦς, ἴτω θαρρῶν, ἀποφα-
 νῶν αὐτὸν τῷ τῷ ὕδα-
 τι λύσας, αὐτὴν καθαροῦν.
 Καὶ πάλιν ἐνοχῶ τοῖς αὐ-
 τοῖς ῥήματι, δώσω τὸ σῆμα
 πλῆξαι, καὶ τὸ κεφαλὴν
 πατάξαι, καθαροῦ γίνεσθαι.

Julian. Caesares, p. 53.

universal Proclamation ;
*Whoever is an Adulterer, or
 a Murderer, whoever is an
 impure profligate Wretch,
 let him come boldly, for I
 declare, that being washed
 in this water [Baptism] he
 shall immediately be clean-
 sed : nay, although he again
 commit those sins, let him
 but knock his Breast, and
 beat his Head, and I will*

make him clean. Much to the same pur-
 pose *Zosimus* (as good a Friend to Chri-
 stianity as either of the former) spite-
 fully charges it upon *Constantine* the
 Great, that being haunted with the Con-
 science of his prodigious Villanies, and
 having no hopes given him by the *Gen-
 tile Priests* of the Expiation of his Crimes,

embraced Christianity, be-
 ing told, that in the Chri-
 stian Religion *there was a
 Promise of cleansing from
 all sin, and that as soon
 as ever any closed with it,
 pardon would be granted
 to the most profligate Offen-
 ders.* As if Christianity
 had been nothing else
 but

Πάντες αὐτοὶ αὐτὸ ἀναγε-
 νικῶν εἶναι τὸν Χριστιανῶν
 διαβεβαιώσας ὅτι αὐτὸν
 τὸ εἶναι ἐπιγγέλμα, τὸ
 τὰς ἀσεβείας μελαμβάνον-
 τας αὐτῆς, πάντες αὐτῶν
 τῶν ἐξω τῶν Χριστῶν κα-
 θιστάς.

Zosim. Hist. lib. 2. p. 534.

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but a *Receptacle* and *Sanctuary* for *Rogues* and *Villains*, where the worst of men might be wicked under hopes of Pardon. But how false and groundless (especially as urged and intended by them) this impious Charge was, appears from the whole design and tenour of the Gospel, and that more than ordinary Vein of Piety and Strictness that was conspicuous in the Lives of its first Professors, whereof we have in this Treatise given abundant evidence.

To this Representation of their Lives and Manners, I have added some Account concerning the Ancient Rites and Usages of the Church; wherein if any one shall meet with something that does not jump with his own humour, he will I doubt not have more Discretion than to quarrel with me for setting down things as I found them. But in this part I have said the less, partly because this was not the thing I primarily designed, partly because it has been done by others in just Discourses. In some few Instances I have remarked the *corruption* and *degeneracy of the Church of Rome*, from the *purity* and *simplicity* of the *Ancient Church*; and more I could easily have added, but that I studiously avoided

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*Prefat. in
Hilar. oper.*

Controversies, it being no part of my Design to inquire what was the Judgment of the Fathers in Disputable Cases, especially the more Abstruse and Intricate Speculations of Theology, but what was their Practice, and by what Rules and Measures they did govern and conduct their Lives. The truth is, their Creed in the first Ages was *short* and *simple*, their Faith lying then (as *Erasmus* observes) not so much in *nice* and *numerous* Articles, as in a *good* and an *holy* Life. At the end of the Book I have added a Chronological *Index* of the *Authors*, according to the Times wherein they are supposed to have lived, with an account of the *Editions* of their Works made use of in this Treatise. Which I did, not that I had a mind to tell the World, either what, or how many Books I had, a piece of Vanity of which had I been guilty, it had been no hard matter to have furnish'd out a much larger Catalogue: but I did it partly to gratifie the request of the Bookseller, partly because I conceived it might not be altogether unuseful to the Reader; the *Index* to give some light to the Quotations, by knowing when the Author lived, especially when he speaks of things done

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done in or near his own Time, and which must otherwise have been done at every turn in the Body of the Book. And because there are some Writings frequently made use of in this Book, the Authors whereof in this *Index* could be reduced to no certain date, especially those that called the *Apostolical Canons* and *Constitutions*, it may not be amiss here briefly to take notice of them. And first for the *Canons*; as I am far from their Opinion who ascribe them to the *Apostles*, so I think their great Antagonist Mr. *Daille* bends the stick as much too far the other way, not allowing them a Being in the World till the Year 500, or a little before. The truth doubtless lies between these two: 'Tis evident both from the Histories of the Church, and many Passages in *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others, that there were in the most early Ages of Christianity frequent Synods and Councils for settling the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church, though the Determinations under that notion be not extant at this day. Part of these *Synodical Decrees*, so many of them as concern'd the Rites and Discipline of the Church, we may conceive some Person of Learning and Judgment gathered together,

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gether probably about the beginning of the third Century, and put them (especially the first *Fifty*, for I look not upon the whole *eighty five* as of equal Value and Authority) if not into the same, into some such sort or Method, wherein we now have them; styling them *Ecclesiastical* or *Apostolical* Canons, not as if they had been composed by the *Apostles*, but either because containing things consonant to the Doctrines and Rules delivered by the Apostles, or because made up of Usages and Traditions supposed to be derived from them, or lastly, because made by Ancient and *Apostolic* men. That many, if not all of these Canons were some considerable time extant before the first *Nicene* Council, we have great reason to believe, from two or three Passages amongst many others. S. *Basil* giving rules about Discipline, appoints a Deacon guilty of Fornication, to be deposed and thrust down into the rank of *Laicks*, and that in that capacity he might receive the Communion there being (says he) ἀρχαῖος κανὼν, an ancient Canon that they that are deposed should only fall under this kind of punishment; the Ancients (as I suppose) following herein that command, thou shalt
not

*Ep. Canon.
ad Amphil.
Can. 3.*

The Preface.

not punish twice for the same fault. This Balsamon joyns with the twenty fifth Canon of the *Apostles*, which treats of the very same Affair; and indeed it cannot in probability be meant of any other, partly because there was no ancient Canon (that we know of) in *S. Basils* time about this business, but that partly because the same Sentence is applied as the reason both in the *Apostolical* and *S. Basils* Canon, *thou shalt not punish twice for the same fault*; which clearly shews whence *Basil* had it and what he understands by his *uncient Canon*. *Theodoret* records a Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 4. p. 3. Letter of *Alexander* Bishop of *Alexandria*, to another of the same name Bishop of *Constantinople*; (this Letter was written a little before the Council of *Nice*) where speaking of some Bishops who had received the *Arrians*, whom he had excommunicated, into Communion, he tells him, *that herein they had done what the Apostolical Canons did not allow*; evidently referring to the twelfth and thirteenth Canons of the *Apostles*, which state the case about one Bishops receiving those into Communion who had been excommunicated by another. To this let me adde, that *Constantine* in a Letter to *Eusebius*, De vit. Const. l. 3. c. 61. p. 518. commends him for refusing to leave his

OWN

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own Bishoprick to go over to that of *Antioch*, to which he was chosen, especially because herein he had exactly observed the rule of Ecclesiastical Discipline, and hath kept the commands of God, and the Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Canon, meaning doubtless the fourteenth Apostolick Canon, which treats about such Removes. Nay, Learned men, both formerly and of late, have observed divers Passages in the *Nicene* Canons themselves, which plainly respect these Canons, as might be made appear (notwithstanding what *Daille* has excepted against it) were this a proper place to discourse of it. This for the Canons.

For the *Constitutions*, they are said to have been composed by *S. Clemens*, at the instance and by the direction of the *Apostles*. And this wild and extravagant Opinion has not wanted its Patrons and Defenders, *Turrianus*, *Bovius*, &c. but herein deserted by the more modest and moderate of their own Party; besides that their *Apostolicness* (in this sense) is by the Learned *Daille* everlastingly shatter'd and broken. But then he sets them at too wide a distance, assigning them to the later end of the fifth Century, when 'tis as clear as the Sun that

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that they were extant and in credit with many before the times of *Epiphanius*, (though somewhat altered now from what they were in his Time) compiled probably out of many lesser *Διδασκαλ* and *Διατάξεις*, Books containing the *Doctrines* and *Rites* that had been delivered and practised by Ancient and *Apostolical* Persons, or at least vented under their names; but whether, as some conjecture, composed by *Clemens Alexandrinus* (and thence by an easie mistake ascribed to *Clemens Romanus*) I am not at leisure to consider. In this Class of Writers I may reckon *Dionysius* the *Arcopagite*, absurdly enough asserted by many to be genuine, by *Daillee* thrust down to the beginning of the sixth Century : but most probably thought to have been written about the middle of the fourth Age, as a Person amongst us, deservedly of great Name and Note, has shewn in his late *Vindication* of *Ignatius's* Epistles. These are the principles of those Authors, who could not be fixed upon any certain Year : the rest have in the *Index* their particular and respective times. To which I have added the account of the *Editions* for the more ready finding (if occasion be) of any passage quoted out of them.

One

The Preface.

One thing indeed there is which I cannot but take notice of, it looks so like a piece of Vanity and Ostentation, that the Margin is charged with so many *quotations*; but whoever considers the nature of my Design, will quickly see that it was absolutely necessary, and that it concerned me not to deliver any thing without good Authority; the reason why I have, where I could, brought them in speaking their own words: though to avoid as much of the Charge as was possible, I omitted the citing Authors in their own Languages, and only set them down in *English*, faithfully representing the Authors sense, though not always tying my self to a strict and precise Translation. How pertinent my *quotations* are, the Reader must judge; I hope he will find them exact, being immediately fetched from the Fountain head; here being very few (if any) that have not been examined more than once. For the Method into which the Book is cast, I chose that which to me seemed most apt and proper, following *S. Pauls* distribution of Religion, into *piety* towards God, *sobriety* towards our selves and *righteousness* towards others; and accordingly divided the Discourse into
three

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three Parts, respecting those three great branches of Religion, though the first is much larger than either of the other, by reason of some *preliminary* Chapters, containing a Vindication of the Christians from those crimes that were charged upon them; that so the Rubbish being cleared and thrown out of the way, we might have a fairer prospect of their Religion afterwards. The Book I confess is swell'd into a greater bulk, than I either thought of or desired; but by reason of somewhat a confused Copy, never designed for the *Press*, no certain measures could be taken of it.

And now if after all this it shall be inquired, why these Papers are made publick, as I can give no very good reason, so I will not trouble my self to invent a bad one. It may suffice to intimate, that this Discourse (long since drawn up at leisure hours) lay then by me, when a tedious and uncomfortable Distemper (whereby I have been taken off from all *publick* Service and the prosecution of *severer* Studies) gave me too much opportunity to look over my Papers, and this especially, which peradventure otherwise had never seen the light. Indeed I must confess I was somewhat

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So before I publish
what the easilier prevailed with to let
this discourse pass abroad, that it might
appear, that when I could not do what
I ought, I was at least willing to do what
I could. If he that reads it shall reap
any delight or satisfaction by it or be
in any measure induced to imitate these
Primitive Vertues, I shall think my pains
well bestow'd : If not, I am not the first,
and probably shall not be the last, that
has written a Book to no purpose.

THE

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C H A P. III.

*Of their Sobriety in respect of their
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C H A P.

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Primitive

of the Committee

CHARTER

of the Officers and Members
of the Committee

CHARTER

of the Officers and Members
of the Committee

Committee

Primitive Christianity :
OR, THE
RELIGION
OF THE
ANCIENT CHRISTIANS,
In the first Ages of the Gospel.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

Things charged upon the Primitive Christians, respecting their Religion.

Christian Religion likely to meet with opposition at it's first setting out. Chiefly undermined by Calumnies and Reproaches. Three things by the Heathens charged upon the Christians, some things
B *respecting*

Part 1.

respecting their Religion; some their outward Condition, others their Moral Carriage, and the matters of their Worship. Their Religion charged with two things, Impiety and Novelty. The Charge of Atheism considered and answered out of the Fathers. The Heathens excepted against as Incompetent Judges of the Affairs of Christianity. In what Sense Christians confessed themselves Atheists. The wretched and absurd Deities that were amongst the Heathens, and the impure manner of their Worship. Atheism properly such, disowned and denied by Christians. The Account they gave of their Religion, and the God whom they worshipped.

NO sooner did the SON of GOD appear in the World, to establish the most excellent Religion that ever was communicated to Mankind, but he met with the most fierce and vigorous opposition: persecuted and devoted to death as soon as he was born, followed all his life with fresh assaults of Malice and Cruelty, his Credit traduced and slandered, his Doctrine despised and slighted, and himself at last put to death with the most Exquisite Arts of Torture and Disgrace.
And

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And if they thus served the Master of the Part I.
house, how much more them of the house-

hold? The Disciple not being above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord.

Therefore when he gave Commission to his Apostles, to publish this Religion to the World, he told them before-hand what hard and unkind Reception they must look to meet with; *That he sent them forth as Sheep in the midst of Wolves, that they should be delivered up to the Councils, and scourged in the Synagogues, and be brought before Kings and Governours, and be hated of all men for his Names sake.* Nay, so high should the Quarrel arise upon the account of Religion, that men should violate some of the nearest Laws of Nature, betray their Friends and Kinsfolk; the Brother delivering up the Brother to Death, and the Father the Child, the Children rising up against their Parents, and causing them to be put to death. This he well foresaw (and the Event truly answered it) would be the Fate of its first appearing in the World: and indeed, considering the present State and Circumstances of the World at that time, it could not reasonably be expected, that the *Christian Religion* should meet with a better En-

Part I. tertainment ; for the Genius and Nature of its *Doctrine* was such, as was almost impossible to escape the frowns and displeasure of men : a *Doctrine* it was, that call'd men off from Lusts and Pleasures, and offered violence to their native Inclinations, that required the greatest strictness and severity of Life, obliged men to *deny themselves*, to *take up their Cross*, and to *follow* the steps of a poor crucified *Saviour*, and that upon little other Encouragement at present, than the invisible Rewards of another World. It introduced *new* Rites and Ceremonies, unknown to those of former Ages, and such as did undermine the received and established Principles of that *Religion*, that for so many Generations had governed the World ; it revealed and brought to light such Truths, as were not only contrary to the Principles of mens Education, but many of them above the reach of natural Comprehension, too deep for the line of Humane Reason to fathom or find out.

Upon these, and such like accounts, Christianity was sure to encounter with mighty *prejudices* and potent opposition ; and so it did : for no sooner did it peep abroad in the World, but it was *every where*

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5

Part I.

where spoken against: Princes and Potentates, and the greatest Powers and Policies of the World, did for some Ages confederate and combine together, to extirpate and banish it out of the World: and certainly, if Arms and Armies, if Strength and Subtlety, if Malice and Cruelty could have stifled it, it had been smothered in its Infancy and first delivery into the World. But notwithstanding all these Oppositions, it still lifted up its head in triumph, and out-brav'd the fiercest storms of Persecution; and as *Tertullian* told their Enemies, *By every* *Apol. c. ult. p. 40.* *exquisite act of Cruelty, they did but tempt others to come over to the Party; the oftener they were mowed down, the faster they sprang up again, the blood of Christians making the Churches soil more fat and fertile.* Hereupon the great Enemy of Mankind, betook himself to other Counsels, and sought to undermine, what he saw he could not carry by open Assault and Battery; he studied to leaven the minds of Men with false and unjust Prejudices against *Christianity*, and to burden it with whole loads of Reproaches and Defamations, knowing no speedier way to hinder its *Reception*, than to blast its *Reputation*. For this purpose all

Part I. the Arts of Spite and Malice were mustred up, and *Christians* confidently charged with all those Crimes that could render them and their Religion vile and infamous. Now the things that were charged upon the Christians were either such as respected their *Religion*, or such as concern'd their *outward State and Condition*; or such as related to their *moral Carriage and Behaviour*, with some things relating to the matter or manner of their Worship. We shall consider them in order, and how the Christians of those Times vindicated themselves from these Imputations.

The Christian Religion at its first coming abroad into the World, was mainly charged with these two things, *Impiety* and *Novelty*. For the first, 'twas commonly cryed out against as a grand piece of *Atheism* and *Impiety*, as an affront to their Religion, and an undermining the very Being and Existence of their Gods. This is the Sum of the

J. Martyr. Charge, as we find it in the Ancient Apo-
Ap. 1. p. 47. logists; more particularly *Cæcilins* the
Athenag. Heathen in *Minutius Felix*, accuses the
Legat. p. 4. *Christians* for a desperate, Undone, and
Arnob. l. 1. Unlawful Faction, who by way of Con-
p. 7. tempt did *snuff* and *spit* at the mention
Min. Fæl. of
p. 7.

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity: 7

of their Gods, deride their Worship, scoff Part I.
 at their Priests, and despise their Temples,
 as no better than *Charnel-Houses*, and
 heaps of Bones and Ashes of the Dead;
 for these, and such like Reasons, the
Christians were every where accounted a
 Pack of *Atheists*, and their Religion **The**
Atheism, and seldom it is that *Julian*
 the Emperour calls *Christianity* by any
 other Name. Thus *Lucian* bringing in *Pseudo-*
Alexander the Impostor setting up for an *mant. p. 888*
 Oracle-monger, ranks the *Christians* with *tom. 2.*
Atheists and *Epicureans*, as those that were
 especially to be banished from his Mys-
 terious Rites. In answer to this Charge the
Christians pleaded especially these three
 things.

First, That the *Gentiles* were for the
 most part *incompetent* Judges of such
 Cases as these, as being almost wholly
 ignorant of the true State of the *Christi-*
an Doctrine, and therefore unfit to pro-
 nounce Sentence against it. Thus when
Crescens the Philosopher had traduced the
Christians as Atheistical and Irreligious,
Justin Martyr answers, that he talked *Just. Mar-*
 about things which he did not under- *tyr. loc. laud.*
 stand, feigning things of his own head,
 only to comply with the humour of his
 seduc'd Disciples and Followers; that in re-

Part I. proaching the Doctrine of *Christ*, when he did not understand it, he discovered a most wicked and malignant Temper, and shewed himself far worse than the most simple and unlearned, who are not wont rashly to bear witness and determine in things not sufficiently known to them: or if he did understand it's *Greatness* and *Excellency*, then he shewed himself much more base and dis-ingenuous, in charging upon it what he knew to be false, and concealing his inward Sentiments and Convictions, for fear lest he should be suspected to be a *Christian*. But *Justin* well knew, that he was miserably unskilful in matters of *Christianity*, having formerly had Conferences and Disputations with him about these things; and therefore offer'd the *Senate* of *Rome* (to whom he then presented his *Apology*) if they had not heard the summe of it, to hold another conference with him, even before the *Senate* it self: which he thought would be a work worthy of so wise and grave a Council: or if they had heard it, then he did not doubt but they clearly apprehended how little he understood these things; or, that if he did understand them, he knowingly dissembled it to his

Ch. i. Primitive Christianity. 9

his Auditors, not daring to own the Part I.
 Truth, as *Socrates* did in the face of
 Danger: an evident Argument, that he
 was *ἰ φιλόσοφος ἀλλὰ φιλόδοξος*, not a *Phi-*
losopher, but a *Slave to popular Applause*
and Glory.

Secondly, They did in some sort con-
 fess the Charge, That according to the
 vulgar Notion which the *Heathens* had
 of their *Deities*, they were *Atheists*, i. e. 7. Mart.
Strangers and Enemies to them; That the Ap. 2. (scu
 Gods of the Gentiles were at best but verius 1.)
Demons, impure and unclean Spirits, who p. 56. &
 had long imposed upon Mankind, and p. 55.
 by their Villanies, Sophistries, and arts
 of Terror, had so affrighted the com-
 mon People, who knew not really what
 they were, and who judge of things
 more by Appearance than by Reason,
 that they call'd them Gods, and gave to
 every one of them that Name, which the
Demon was willing to take to himself;
 and that they really were nothing but
 Devils, fallen and Apostate Spirits, the
Christians evidently manifested at every
 turn, forcing them to the confessing it,
 while by Prayer and invoking the name
 of the true God, they drove them out
 of possessed Persons, and therefore they
 trembled to encounter with a *Christian*,

as

Part I. as *Octavius* triumphingly tells *Cecilius* ;
 Pag. 23. that they entertained the most absurd
 and fabulous Notions of their Gods, and
 usually ascrib'd such things to them as
 would be accounted an horrible *shame*
 and *dishonour* to any wise and good man;
 the Worship and Mysterious Rites of
 many of them being so brutish and filthy
 that the honefter and severer *Romans*
 were asham'd on't, and therefore over-
 turn'd their Altars, and banished them
 out of the Roll of their Deities, though
 their Degenerate Posterity took them in
 Apol. c. 7. again, as *Tertullian* observes ; their Gods
 P. 7. themselves so impure and beastly, their
 Worship so obscene and detestable, that
 de err. prof. *Julius Firmicus*^{de} advises them to turn
 Relig. p. 9. their *Temples* into *Theatres*, where the
 Secrets of their Religion may be deli-
 vered in *Scenes*, and to make their *Play-
 ers Priests*, and that the Common Rout
 might sing the *Amours*, the Sports and
 Pastimes, the Wantonnesses and Im-
 pieties of their Gods, no places be-
 ing so fit for such a Religion as they.
 Besides the attributing to them Hu-
 mane Bodies, with many Blemishes and
 Imperfections, and subjection to the Mi-
 series of Humane Life, and to the Laws
 of Mortality, they could not deny them

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity.

II

to have been guilty of the most horrid Part I.

and prodigious Villanies and Enormities, Revenge and Murther, Incest and Luxury, Drunkenness and Intemperance, Theft and unnatural Rebellion against their Parents, and such like, of which their own Writings were full almost in every Page, which served only to corrupt and debauch the Minds and Manners of

Youth, (as *Octavius* tells his Adversary ; *Min. Fel.* where he pursues this Argument at large, *p. 19. Vid. Arnob. adv. gent. l. 1. p. 7.* with great Eloquence and Reason. Nay,

those among them that were most *inquisitive* and *serious*, and that entertained more abstract and refin'd Apprehensions of things than the Common People, yet could not agree in any fit

and rational Notion of a Deity, some *Vid. Min. Fel. p. 15. 16.* ridiculously affirming one thing, and some

another, till they were divided into a hundred different Opinions, and all of them farther distant from the *Truth*, than they were from one another ; the Vulgar in the mean while making Gods of the most brutish Objects, such as Dogs, Cats, Wolves, Goats, Hawks, Dragons, Beetles, Crocodiles, &c. This *Origen*

against *Celsus* particularly charges upon the *Ægyptians*, *When you approach* (*says* *Adv. Cels. l. 3. p. 121.* he)

their sacred places, they have glorious Groves

Part I. Groves and Chappels, Temples with goodly Gates, and stately Portico's, and many mysterious and religious Ceremonies; but when once you are entred, and got within their Temples, you shall see nothing but a Cat, or an Ape, or a Crocodile, or a Goat, or a Dog, worshipp'd with the most solemn Veneration. Nay, they deified senseless and inanimate things, that had no life or power to help themselves, much less their Worshippers, Herbs, Roots, and Plants; nay, unmanly and degenerate passions, Fear, Paleness, &c. fell down before Stumps and Statues, which owed all their Divinity to the Cost and Folly of their Votaries, despised and trampled on by the forriest Creatures, Mice, Swallows, &c. who were wont to build Nests in the very mouth of their Gods, and Spiders to periwig their Heads with Cobwebs; being forc'd first to make them, and then make them clean, and to defend and protect them, that they might fear and worship them, as he in Minutius wittily derides them; in whose Worship there are (says he) many things that justly deserve to be laugh'd at, and others that call for Pity and Compassion. And what wonder now if the Christians were not in the least ashamed to be called Atheists, with respect to such

Vid. Athanas. orat. contr. gent.

Min. Fel. p. 20.

such Deities, and such a Religion as this Part I. was?

Thirdly, in the strict and proper Notion of *Atheism* they no less truly than confidently denied the Charge, and appealed to their severest Adversaries, whether those who owned such Principles as they did, could reasonably be styled *Atheists*. None ever pleaded better and more Irrefragable Arguments for the Existence of a Supreme Infinite Being, who made and governs all things by Infinite Wisdom and Almighty Power, none ever more ready to produce a most clear and candid *confession* of their Faith, as to this grand Article of Religion, than they. Although we profess our selves *Atheists*, with respect to those whom you esteem and repute to be Gods (*so their Apologist* *J. Martyr.* *tells the Senate*) yet not in respect of the *Ap. I. p. 56.* true God, the Parent and Fountain of Wisdom and Righteousness, and all other Excellencies and Perfections, who is infinitely free from the least Contagion or Spot of Evil: *Him*, and his *only begotten Son* (who instructed us and the whole Society of good Angels in these Divine Mysteries) and the *Spirit of Prophecy*, we worship and adore, honouring them in Truth, and with the highest Reason, and
ready

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Part I. ready to communicate these things to any one that's willing to learn them, as we our selves have received them. Can

Ib. p. 60. we then be *Atheists*, who worship the great *Creator* of this World, not with Blood, Incense, and Offerings, (which we are sufficiently taught he stands in no need of) but exalt him according to our Power, with Prayers and Praises, in all the Addresses we make to him: believing this to be the only Honour that's worthy of him, not to consume the Creatures which he has given us for our use, and the comfort of those that want, in the fire by Sacrifice; but to approve our selves thankful to him, and to sing and celebrate Rational Hymns and Sacrifices, pouring out our Prayers to him as a grateful Return for those many good things which we have received, and do yet expect from him, according to the faith and trust that we have in him. To

Athen. leg. pro Christi- an. p. 5. the same purpose *Athenagoras*, in his Return to his Charge. *Diagoras* indeed (says he) was guilty of the deepest Atheism and Impiety; but *we*, who separate God from all material Being, and affirm him to be Eternal and Unbegotten, but all matter to be made and corruptible, how unjustly are we branded with Impiety?

It's

Ch.I. Primitive Christianity. 15

It's true, did we side with *Diagoras* in de- Part I.
nying a Divinity, when there are so many
and such powerful Arguments from the
Creation and Government of the World,
to convince us of the Existence of God
and Religion, then both the Guilt and
Punishment of *Atheism* might deservedly
be put upon us. But when our Religion
acknowledges one God, the Maker of
the Universe, who being uncreate him-
self, created all things by his Word, we
are manifestly wrong'd both in Word
and Deed; both in being charged with
it, and in being punished for it. We are
accused (says *Arnobius*) for introducing *Lib. I. p. 7.*
Prophane Rites, and an Impious Religi-
on; but tell me, O ye Men of Reason,
how dare you make so rash a Charge?
To adore the mighty God, the Sove-
reign of the whole Creation, the Go-
vernour of the highest Powers, to pray
to him with the most Obsequious Reve-
rence; under an Afflicted State to lay
hold of him with all our Powers, to love
him, and look up to him; is this a dis-
mal and detestable Religion, a Religion
full of Sacrilege and Impiety, destroy-
ing and defiling all Ancient Rites? Is
this that bold and prodigious Crime, for
which your Gods are so angry with us,
and

Part I. and for which you your selves do so rage against us, confiscating our Estates, banishing our Persons, burning, tearing, and racking us to death with such Exquisite Tortures? *We Christians* are nothing else but the Worshippers of the Supreme King and Governour of the World, according as we are taught by *Christ our Master*; search, and you'll find nothing else in our Religion: this is the *summe* of the whole Affair; this the end and design of our Divine Offices; before him it is that we are wont to prostrate and bow our selves, him we worship with common and conjoyn'd Devotions, from him we beg those things which are just and honest, and such as are not unworthy of him to hear and grant. So little Reason had the Enemies of *Christianity* to brand it with the Note of *Atheism* and *Irreligion*.

CHAP. II.

Of the Novelty that was charged
upon Christianity.

Christianity excepted and cryed out against as a late Novel Doctrine. This a common Charge: continued when Christianity had been some hundreds of Years in the World. Christianity greatly prejudiced by this Charge. Men loth to forsake the Religion of their Ancestors. What the Christians answered to it. Christian Religion the same in substance and effect with that of the ancient Jews: in that respect, by far the Oldest Religion in the World: prov'd and urg'd by Tertullian, Cl. Alexandrin. Eusebius, &c. It's Lateness and Novelty no real prejudice to Rational and Unbiass'd men. The Folly and Vanity of adhering to absurd and unreasonable Customs and Principles, because Ancient; and of refusing to change Opinions for the better. An Objection; if Christ and Christianity were so great Blessings to Mankind, why was it so long before God revealed them? Answered out of Arnobius.

Part I.

THis *Artifice* proving weak and ineffectual, the next Charge was its *Lateness and Novelty*, that it was an upstart Sect, and but of Yesterdays standing, not known in the World many years before: whereas the Religion of the *Gentiles* had uncontrollably and almost universally obtained from Ages and Generations: a Doctrine newly sprung up, and come, as 'twere, from a far Country, *προσφατὸν ὁ δόξον* τὸ καὶ ἡμῶν λόγος, as 'tis in *Theophilus Antiochenus*: a Divorce, or rending themselves from the Institutions of their Ancestors, as *Tertullian* has it. This Charge begun betimes, when *S. Paul* preached at *Athens*, we find this the first thing charged upon him, *That, he was a setter forth of strange Gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection*: and it was followed with a loud Cry in succeeding times. You are wont to object to us (says *Arnobius*) that our Religion is *novel*, started up not many days ago, and that you ought not to desert your ancient way, and the Religion of your Country, to espouse *barbarous* and foreign Rites. And *Eusebius* tells us, the Heathens were wont to reason thus: What *strange* Profession of Religion is this?

Lib. 3. p. 119. B.

Ad Nation. l. 1. c. 10.

p. 46.

Act. 17. 18.

Li. 2. p. 40.

Prepar. Evang. l. 1. c. 2. p. 5.

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 19

this? What *new* way of Life, wherein Part 1.
 we can neither discern the Rites amongst
 us us'd in *Greece*, nor amongst any Sect
 of the *Barbarians*? Who can deny them
 to be *impious*, who have forsaken the
 Customs of their Fathers, observed be-
 fore in all Cities and Countries, revolt-
 ing from a way of Worship which had
 been universally received from all Ages,
 both by *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, enter-
 tained both in Cities and Villages, coun-
 tenanced and approved by the common
 Vote and Consent of all *Kings*, *Law-*
makers, *Philosophers*, and the greatest
 Persons whatsoever. Nay, we may ob-
 serve, that after *Christianity* had been
 settled for some hundreds of Years in the
 World, and was become the prevailing
 Religion, and had in a manner banished
 all others out of doors, and driven them
 into Corners, yet this Charge still con-
 tinued. Thus *Julian* the Emperour, writ-
 ting to the People of *Alexandria* con-
 cerning the *Galileans*, (so he was wont
 in scorn to call the Christians) that he
 wondered that any of them durst dwell
 amongst them, or that they would suf-
 fer these Despisers of the Religion of
 their Country to be in any place amongst
 them; calls *Christianity*, the *new Doctrine*
 that

Ep. 51. oper.

Jul. part. 2.

p. 208.

Part I.

*De mort.**Peregrin.*

tom. 2.

p. 762.

Symmach.

ep. lib. 10.

ep. 54. ad

*Valent.**Theod. Ar-**cad. A. A.*

A. p. 537.

that had been preached to the World: the very same Title which *Lucian* had also long since bestowed upon it, where speaking of our *Saviour*, he calls him the Great Man that was crucified in *Palestine*, who introduced that *new Religion* into the World. So *Symmachus* some years after *Julian* (a man no less eminent for his parts and eloquence, than for his power and authority, being Chief Priest and Prefect of Rome) confidently owns to the Emperours themselves, (though they were *Christians*) that he did endeavour to defend the Institutions of their Ancestors, the settled Rights and Laws of the Countrey, (he means them of Religion) that he designed to settle that state of Religion, which for so many Ages had been profitable to the Commonwealth; and therefore begs of them, that what they had received when they were Children, now they were old they might leave to their Posterity; that they were to be true to the Trust that had from so many Ages been devolved upon them, and were to follow their Parents, as they had happily done their Ancestors, that had gone before them. So he, pleading the cause of *Paganism* from its antiquity and prescription, obliquely reflecting

Pag. 538.

Pag. 539.

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 21

flecting upon the *Novellism* of *Christia-* Part 1.
nity, for more he durst not speak, the
 Emperours (to whom he made his Ad-
 dress) being themselves Christians. This
 indeed must needs be a mighty *preju-*
dice against the *Christian Religion* at its
 first coming into the World; for all
 men as they have a natural *Reverence*
 for Religion, so they have a great *Ve-*
neration for Antiquity, the Customs
 and Traditions of their Fathers, which
 they entertain as a most inestimable *de-*
positum, and for which they look upon
 themselves as obliged to contend, as
 for that which is most Solemn and Sa-
 cred. What more excellent and vene-
 rable (says the Heathen in *Minutius Fæ-* *Min. Fæd.*
lix) than to entertain the Discipline of P. 5.
 our Fore-fathers, to solemnize that Re-
 ligion that has been delivered to us, to
 worship those Gods, the Knowledge of
 whom has been infus'd into us by our
 Parents, not boldly to determine con-
 cerning the Deities, but to believe those
 who have been before us. To the same
 purpose *Lactantius* speaking of the Hea- *Lact. l. 2.*
 thens, they go on (says he) most per- *c. 6. p. 171.*
 tinaciously to maintain and defend
 the Religion derived down to them
 from their Ancestors, not so much con-
 sidering

Part I. fidering what they are, as concluding them to be right and good, becaufe the Ancients conveyed them to them; nay, fo great the Power and Authority of Antiquity, that it's accounted a kind of *Impiety* to question it, or enquire into it. Upon thefe accounts the *Gentiles* bore fo hard upon *Christianity*, beholding it as a *Mushroom Sect*, sprung up of a sudden, and as an incroaching Inmate, undermining the Eftablifhed Religions of the World.

Now we find two Pleas efpecially which the *Christians* made to this Indictment.

First, That the Charge was not wholly and univerfally true: for befides that many Principles of *Christianity* were the fame with thofe of the *Law of Nature*; the *Christian Religion* was for fubftance the fame with that of the Ancient *Jews*, whose Religion claim'd the Precedency of all others in the World. That the Religion was in fubftance and effect the fame, is exprefly afferted and proved by *Eusebius*. The Ancient *Patriarchs* were the *Christians* of the old World, who had the fame Faith, Religion, and Worfhip common with us, (nay, the fame name too, as he endeavours to prove from

Demonstr.
Evang. l. i.
c. 5. p. 9.
Cyc.

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 23

from that, *Touch not mine Anointed*, *τῶν* Part I.
Χριστῶν μου, *my Christs* or *Christians*. And
 how far superiour in Age they were
 to any thing that's recorded of the
 most *ancient Gentiles*, to their Oldest
 Writers, *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Hesiod*; nay, to
 their very *Gods* themselves, is sufficiently
 made good by many of the Ancient Fa-
 thers; there being at the easiest Compu-
 tation between *Moses* and *Homer* above
 600 years: nay, *Cadmus* (the first Inven-
 ter of Letters among the *Græcians*) was
 some Ages *junior* unto *Moses*. There-
 fore *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that *Moses* and
 the Prophets were not only more Anci-
 ent than *Plato*, but than *Homer* himself,
 yea, than the very Invention of Letters
 amongst the *Grecians*, who yet were as
 proud of their *Antiquity* as any other
 Nation in the World. Nay, whatever
 useful and excellent Notions the great
 Masters of Religion amongst the *Hea-*
thens had amongst them, 'tis plain they
 borrowed, or more truly, *stole* them,
 from the Writings of the ancient *Jews*,
 as is abundantly demonstrated by *Euse-*
bius at large; as before him it had been
 done by *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and by
Tertullian before them both, who shews,
 that all their *Poets* and *Philosophers* had

*Vid. Athen.
leg. pro
Christianis
p. 16. Clem.
Alex. Strom.
lib. 1.*

*Adv. Cels.
l. 6. p. 279.*

*Prepar. E-
vang. l. 10.
tot. Cl.
Alex. Strom.
l. 1. p. 320.
Tert. Ap. c.
47. Vide
Theod. de
curand.
Græc. Asef.
Serm. 2.
de princip.*

Part I. drunk deep of the *Fountain* of the Prophets, and had forced their best Doctrines and Opinions from thence, though subtilly altering and disguising them, to make them look more like their own. So that upon this consideration the (Accusation was unjust and false, and *Christianity* appears the oldest Religion in the World.

Secondly, admit the *Christian* Religion in a more limited and restrained sense, to be of a far *later* standing than the Religion of the *Gentiles*, yet they pleaded, that 'twas infinitely reasonable, that they should change for the better, whenever it offered it self to them ; that *novel truth* was better than *ancient error*, and that they ought not to be eternally bound up in old inveterate Customs and Principles, when those which were abundantly more reasonable and satisfactory were presented to them. You tell us (says *Clemens Alex.*) that you may not subvert the Customs received from your Ancestors. But if so, why then are we not content without any other *Food* than our *Mothers milk*, to which we were accustomed when we first came into the World ; why do we *encrease or impair* our Estates, and not

Admitt.
ad gent.
P. 57.

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 25

rather keep them at the same pitch, just **Part 1.**
as we received them from our Fathers?

Why have we left off those Toys and Sports, to which we were wonted while Infants and Children, but only because Years and Discretion (although we had no other Tutor) would make us quit those Childish and Trifling Vanities?

That Old Age (says S. *Ambrose*) has true *Ambr. ep. 2.*
cause to blush, that is ashamed to *reform.* *contr. Sym-*
mach. inter

'Tis not *multitude of years*, but the *goodness* *ep. Sym-*
of manners, that makes Gray Hairs wor- *mach. p.*
thy of Praise and Honour. No Age is *562.*

too late to learn, nor is it shame to grow better. What wilt thou do (says *La-* *Last. loco*
stantius to the Heathen) wilt thou follow *supra lau-*
dato.

Reason or thy *Ancestors*? If Reason, then thou must needs relinquish the Authority and Institutions of thy Fore-fathers, because that way only can be right that is warranted and prescribed by Reason: but if Piety towards thine Ancestors sway with thee to follow them, thou must confess both that they were Fools in devoting themselves to a Religion contrary to Reason, and that thou thy self art unwise and simple in worshipping what thou art convinced to be false. Besides, that they had little reason to boast of those goodly Ancestors, to whom they
ad-

Part I.

Adv. gent.
L. 2. p. 40,
 41.

adhered so close, and upon whose Authority they did so much depend, (as he goes on to demonstrate in the remaining part of that Chapter. That you object to us the Novelty of our Religion, (so *Arnobius*) may we not charge some such fault upon the first and most Ancient Ages of the World, who at first liv'd in a very poor and mean state; but by little and little changed it into a more liberal and splendid course of Life? Was it any crime that they changed their *Beasts skins* into more comely and convenient Garments, or that they were no longer fond of their *Thatch'd Cottages*, or chose to dwell like Wild Beasts in Rocks and Caverns, when they had learnt to build *better habitations*? 'Tis natural to all Mankind to prefer better before what is worse, profitable before what is useless, and to seek after what we are assur'd is more grateful and excellent. Therefore when you charge us with Apostasie from the Religion of the Ancients, you should rather consider the *cause* than the *action*, and not so much upbraid us with what we have left, as examine what it is we have *entertain'd*. For if meerly to change our Opinion, and to pass from Ancient Institutions to what's more late

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 27

late and new, be a fault and crime; Part I.
 then none so guilty of the Charge as
 your selves, who have so oft changed
 your Manners and course of Life, and by
 embracing new Rites and Customs, have
 condemned those that went before :
 which he there makes good by particular
 Instances. And the same Answer S. *Ambrose*
 gives to *Symmachus*, if nothing but
 Ancient Rites will please you, how
 comes it to pass that there has been a Suc-
 cession of New and Foreign Rites even
 in *Rome* it self? Of which he gives him
 many particular Examples. In short,
Ambrose wittily argues thus: *Our way* ib. p. 42.
of Religion (you say) is new, and yours
ancient; and what does this either hurt
our cause, or help yours? If ours be new,
'twill in time become old. Is yours old?
There was a time when it was new. The
Goodness and Authority of Religion is not
to be valued by Length of Time but by the
Excellency of its Worship; nor does it be-
come us to consider so much when it begun,
as what it is we worship.

It may not be impertinent in this place
 to take notice of what the Heathens ob-
 jected as a Branch of this Charge; that
 if God's sending *Christ* into the World
 was so great a Blessing, why did this Sa-
Id. ib. p. 43.
 Vid. Greg.
 Nyss. Orat.
 Catechet. c.
 29. tom. 2.
 p. 521.

28 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part I. *viour* of Mankind come no *sooner* to reveal this Religion, to lead men into the Truth, to tell the World who this True God was, and to reduce us to the Adoration of him. If so, why did God suffer him to stay so long, and to be born (as 'twere) but a few hours before, in comparison of the preceding Ages of the World? To this *Arnobius* answers with a great deal of *modesty* and *reason*, That he could not tell: that 'twere easie to retort the same Captious Question upon them, if 'twere so much to the benefit of the World that *Hercules*, *Esculapius*, *Mercury*, &c. should be Gods, why were they born and deified no *sooner*, that not only Posterity but Antiquity might have reap'd advantage by them? If there was reason in one case, then there was also in the other; but to assign proper and particular Reasons was not possible; it not being within the power of such a short-sighted Creature as man is, to fathom the depth of the Divine Councils, or to discover by what ways or methods he disposes his Affairs; these things being known only to him, who is the grand Parent, the Sovereign Lord and Governour of all things: that although we are not able to assign the Cause why a thing

thing

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 29

thing comes to pass in this, or that particular manner, yet this concludes never a whit the more that the thing is not so, or that it is less credible, when it has otherwise the most clear and unquestionable Evidence and Demonstration. More particularly he answers, that our *Saviour* cannot be said to have been lately sent in respect of God, because in respect of Eternity there is nothing late; where there is neither *beginning* nor *end*, there can be nothing *too soon*, nothing *too late*. Time indeed is transacted by parts and terms, but these have no place in a perpetual and uninterrupted *series* of Eternal Ages. What if that *state* of things to which he came to bring relief, required that *season* of Time to come in? What if the condition of Ancient and Modern Times were in this case not alike? or call'd for somewhat different methods of Cure? It may be the great God then chose to send *Christ*, when the state of Mankind was more *broken* and *shatter'd*, and Humane Nature become more weak and unable to help it self. This we are sure of, that if what so lately came to pass had been necessary to have been done some thousands of years ago, the Supreme Creator would have

Part I. have done it, or had it been necessary to have been done thousands of years hence, nothing could have forc'd God to have anticipated the settled Periods of Time one moment: for all his Actions are managed by fix'd and eternal Reasons, and what he has once determined, cannot be frustrated by any Change or Alteration. And thus we see how easily, and yet how satisfactorily, the *Primitive Christians* wip'd off that double Imputation of *Impiety* and *Novelty*, which the Gentiles had so undeservedly cast upon their Religion.

CHAP. III.

Things charged upon the Christians respecting their Outward Condition.

The Christians look'd upon, and despis'd by the Heathens, as a company of rude and illiterate persons, Mechanicks, silly Women and Children. This Charge considered and largely answered by Origen. Christianity provides for the truest and best Knowledge: it excludes none, learned

or unlearned. Christians not shy of communicating the Knowledge of their Mysteries to men sober and inquisitive. The Efficacy of Christianity in prevailing upon men of the acutest Parts and greatest Learning. The Christians accused for being poor and mean. This Charge (universally) false. Christianity entertain'd by Persons of all sorts, of the Highest as well as the Lowest Rank. Several Instances of such: Fl. Clemens and Fl. Domitilla (Domitian's near Kindred) Christians; another Domitilla Domitian's Niece, Acil. Glabrio the Consul, Apollonius the Senator, and others. Philip the Emperour proved to be no Christian: the rise of the Story whence. Though Christianity had had no such Persons under its Profession, this had been no just reasonable Prejudice. External Pomp and Grandeur not necessary to Religion. The Advantages Christians reaped from their Meanness and Contempt of the World. Of their being charged as a People useless and unserviceable to the Publick. This disowned. The Opinion that it was not lawful for Christians to bear Arms or Offices, particular onely to some persons and in some cases, and why. How much the World

Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

was beholden to Christians for reclaiming men from Vice and Wickedness. The Gospel greatly instrumental that way; its general Influence upon those whom it did not convert: the Writings of Philosophers generally better after Christianity appeared, and why. The excellent Prayer of Simplicius. Christians very useful by frequent working Beneficial Miracles, Curing Diseases, Raising the Dead, Dispossessing Devils, &c. This Miraculous power continued for several Ages in the Church. Christians further traduced as pernicious to the World, as the cause of all publick Evils and Calamities. This objected at every turn. The occasion of S. Augustine's and Orosius his writing a Vindication of it. This Charge justly retorted upon the Heathens, and they sent to seek the cause of publick Calamities nearer home. Some few hinted by Tertullian. Christians unjustly charged with it, because the World was pestered with such Evils before Christianity appeared in it. The publick State better and more prosperous since Christianity than before. Its Prosperity ebb'd or increas'd according to the Entertainment Christianity found in the World.

THE second sort of *Arts* which the Enemies of *Christianity* made use of, to render *Christians* vile and despicable, related to the Circumstances of their **External State and Condition** in the World, where two things were laid to their Charge, that they generally were *a very mean and inconsiderable sort of men*, and that they were *an useless and unserviceable people*, nay *pernicious and mischievous* to the World. They were looked upon as the *lowest* and *meanest* Rank of men, Persons neither considerable for their *parts* and *learning*, nor for their *estates* and *quality*. (Inconsiderable they were accounted in respect of *parts* and *learning*; you scorn and spit us out as rude *Adv. gent.* and simple, and think that the Treasury of *3. P. 49.* all Divine and Excellent Knowledge is open only to your selves, as *Arnobius* tells them. Thus *Celsus* objected, that amongst the *Orig. contr.* *Christians* no wise and learned men were *Cels. l. 3.* admitted to the *mysteries* of their Religion. *P. 137.* Let no man come that is Learned, Wise, and Prudent, for these things (says he) they account evil and unlawful; but if any be unlearned, an Infant or an Ideot, let him come and welcome; openly declaring, that none but Fools and

D such

Part I.

Is. p. 141.

Pag. 144.

Min. Fel,
p. 7.

such as are devoid of Sense and Reason, Slaves, silly Women, and little Children are fit Disciples for the God they worship. We may observe (says he) these trifling and *Mountebank Impostors*, bragging great things to the Vulgar, not in the presence and company of Wise men (for that they dare not) but wherever they espy a flock of Boys, Slaves, and weak simple People, there they presently crowd in, and boast themselves. You shall see (as he goes on in this Charge) Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most Rustick and illiterate Fellows, at home when before their Elders and Betters as mute as Fishes; but when they can get a few Children and silly Women by themselves, then who so wise and learned, who so full of talk, and so able to teach and instruct as they? Much to the same purpose *Cecilius* discourses in *Minutius Felix*, that the *Christians* were men of a desperate and unlawful Faction, who gathering a Company out of the very Dregs and Refuse of the People, of silly, easie, credulous Women, who by reason of the weakness of their Sex are easily imposed and wrought upon, combine them into a wicked Confederation, a People *mute in*

pub.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 13

publick, but in corners talkative and full Part I.
of prattle. Now to this part of the Accu-
sation *Origen* answers, that 'tis for the
main false, and proceeds from the Spi- Pag. 137.
rit of Malice and Reproach. The *sum* of & seq. 9.
his Answer, as he delivers it to the seve-
ral parts of the Charge, take thus: That
the *Christian Doctrine* invites and calls
men to Wisdom, as appears both from
the Writings of the *Jews* of Old, and the
Scriptures of the *New Testament*, where-
in we find many singularly Eminent for
Wisdom and Learning, *Moses*, *Solomon*,
Daniel, and such like of old, and the
blessed *Jesus* made choice of such Disci-
ples, as whom he judged fittest to com-
municate the Secrets of his Religion
to, and privately opened and explain-
ed to them, what he only delivered in
Parables and Similitudes unto others;
that he promised to send forth *Prophets*, Mat. 23. 34.
Wise men, and *Scribes*, for the divulging
and propagating of his *Doctrine*; that
St. Paul reckons *Wisdom* and *Knowledge* 1 Cor. 12. 8.
in the first Rank of the *Gifts of God*, and
that if he any where seem to reflect se-
verely upon Wisdom or Humane Learn-
ing, (which probably may be the first
rise of this Charge) he only censures
the *abuse*, never intending to blame the

Part I.

Tit. I. 9.

thing it self; that when he prescribes the Properties of a *true Bishop*, or Governour of the Church, he requires this as one necessary Qualification, *That he be apt to teach, and able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and to convince the Gainsayers.* That we are so far from prohibiting any, that come who will, Wise, Learned, and Prudent, provided the Rude, Simple, and Unlearned be not excluded; for to them also the Gospel does promise and provide a Remedy, making them meet for God. That no man but must confess that 'tis an excellent thing to study the best Arts and Discipline, and that Learning, the Study of Arts and Prudence, are so far from being an hindrance to the Knowledge of God, that they mightily help it and advance it. That it's a great Calumny to⁷ compare us to *wandering Impostors*, who by our reading and expounding the Divine Oracles, do only exhort the People to *Piety* toward the great God, and to the rest of those *Virtues* which are it's individual Companions; endeavouring to rescue men from a Contempt of the Deity, and all brutish and irregular Passions; a thing which the very best Philosophers of
 them

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 37

them all could wish for. (That *Christians* Part I.

are so far from admitting any hand over head, that they first pre-examine the Minds of those that desire to become their Auditors; and having privately had tryal of them, before they receive them into the Congregation, when they perceive them fully resolved to lead a Pious and Religious Life, then they admit them in their distinct Orders, some that are newly admitted, but not yet *baptized*, others that have given some evidence and demonstration of their purpose to live as becomes Christians; amongst whom there are *Governours* appointed to inspect and inquire into the Life and Manners of those who have been admitted, that they may expel and turn off those *Candidates* of Religion who answer not their Profession, and heartily entertain those that do, and by daily Converses build them up and make them better. That it's false to say that we apply our selves only to *Women* and *Children*, and that in *corners*, when we endeavour what we can by all means to fill our Societies with Wise and Prudent Persons, and to such we open the more *sublime* and *recondite* principles of Religion, otherwise accommodating our Discourses

Part I. to the Capacities of meaner persons, who stand more in need of *milk* than *strong meat*: that we desire that all men may be trained up in the Word of God, and that Servants and Children may have such Instructions given them, as are suitable and convenient to them, the Ministers of our Religion professing themselves to be Debtors both to the *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, both to the *wise* and to the *unwise*, that as much as may be they may outgrow their Ignorance, and attain to the best kind of Wisdom. And whereas we are accused to seduce and circumvent *stupid Women* and *little Children*, and to draw them away from more weighty and serious Counsels; let him produce any such, and enquire of them whether ever they heard better *Masters* than ours, or if they did, why they would leave so grave a Discipline, and suffer themselves to be seduced into a worse. But he'll find no such thing to fasten upon us; but that on the contrary we reclaim *Women* from Immorality, from falling out with their Husbands, and parting from them, from the wild Extravagancies of the Sports and Theatres, and from all Superstition whatsoever. The Youth, who are prone to
Vice

Ch.3. Primitive Christianity. 39

Vice and Luxury, we restrain, by telling them not only how base and degenerate a thing it is to indulge their Lust, but into how much danger they precipitate their Souls, and what Punishments the Divine Vengeance lays up for such Profligate Offenders. We openly (not in corners) promise Eternal Happiness to those who live according to the Rules of the Divine Law, who set God always before their Eyes, and whatever they do, endeavour to approve themselves to him: and is this the *Discipline*, these the *Doctrines* of Weavers, Taylors, Fullers, and the most Rustick and Illiterate Persons? Surely no. If at any time we refuse to produce our Instructions and Counsels before *Masters of Families* or the *Doctors of Philosophy*, know, that if they be studious of *Virtue*, Enemies to Vice, and such as breath after the best things, before such we are most willing and ready to instruct our Youth, being well assur'd we shall find them favourable Judges. But if they be Enemies to Goodness and *Virtue*, and Opposers of sound wholesome Doctrine, then if we hold our Peace, no fault can justly be laid upon us: for in such circumstances the Philosophers themselves would not dis-

Part I. cover the Dictates and Mysteries of their Philosophy. This is the *substance* of the several Answers, which *Origen* pursues more at large through several Pages: which though very Rational and Satisfactory, yet we find something pleaded more direct and positive to the Charge; *viz.* That although amongst the *Christians* (as 'tis in any Society of Men) the Vulgar and more common sort might not be men of the sharpest Understanding, or vers'd in the more Polite Arts of Learning, yet wanted they not (and those no small number) great *Scholars*, men of Acute Parts, and Raised Abilities, such as had run through the whole *circle* of the *Sciences*, who daily came over to them. So *Arnobius*, urging the Triumphant Power and Efficacy which the Christian Faith had over the Minds of men, who (says he) would not believe it, when he sees in how short a time it has conquered so great a part of the World; when men of so great Wit and Parts, *Orators*, *Grammarians*, *Rhetoricians*, *Lawyers*, *Physicians*, and *Philosophers*, have thrown up those former Sentiments, of which but a little before they were so tenacious, and have embraced the Doctrines of the Gospel. So fast

Adv. gent.
l. 2 p. 21.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity.

41

fast did the *Christian Church* fill with the Part I.
most Eminent Professors of all parts of
Learning that were then known to the
World.

Nor were the *Christians* of those times
more despised upon the account of their
weakness and *ignorance*, than they were
for their *meanness* and *poverty*. They
were looked upon as *de ultima face*, as
the *scum* and *refuse* of the people, scarce
a considerable Man to be found amongst
them. See (says the Heathen in *Minu-*
tius Felix) the most and best of all your Pag. 9.
Party are a *poor, beggarly, hunger-starv'd*
Generation, that have neither Riches nor
Reputation to bear them out. This
Charge (however impertinent, seeing the
goodness of any Religion depends not
upon the *greatness* of it's Professors)
was yet as *untrue* as 'twas *unreasonable*;
the *Christians* having amongst them Per-
sons of the choicest Place and Quality,
and after some years, the Princes and
Potentates of the World, and even the
Emperours themselves struck sail to the
Scepter of Christ. When *Scapula* the Pre-
sident of *Carthage* threatned the *Christi-*
ans with severe and cruel Usage, *Ter-*
tullian bids him bethink himself; What Ad Scap.
wilt thou do (says he) with so many c. 4. p. 71.
thou-

42 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part I. thousands of Men and Women of every Sex, Age, and Dignity, as will freely offer themselves? What *Fires*, what *Swords* wilt thou stand in need of; What is *Carthage* it self like to suffer if *decimated* by thee; when every one shall find there his near Kindred and Neighbours, and shall see there Matrons, and men perhaps of thy own Rank and Order, and the most Principal Persons, and either the Kindred or Friends of those who are thy own nearest Friends. Spare them therefore for *your own* sake, if not for *ours*: And if there were persons of such Quality in *Africk* (so remote, and in a manner so barbarous a Province) what may we suppose there were in *Rome* it self, and other parts of the *Roman Empire*? And in his *Apology*, speaking of the vast spreading of the Party, Though (says he) we be men of quite another way, yet have we fill'd all places among you, your *Cities*, *Islands*, *Castles*, *Corporations*, *Councils*, nay your *Armies* themselves, your *Tribes*, *Companies*, yea the *Palace*, the *Senate*, and the *Courts of Justice*; only your *Temples* we have left you free. (Sure I am, *Pliny* in his Letter to the *Emperour*, tells him, that *Christianity* had not only over-run City and Coun-

Ep. 37.
p. 30.

Lib. 10. Ep.
97.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 43

Country, but that it had infected many **Part I.**
of every Sex, Age, and Order of Men.

And indeed it were no hard matter out of the Ancient *Histories* and *Martyrologies* of the Church, nay from the *Heathen* Writers themselves, to prove that Persons of the highest Rank and Quality (even in those times) embraced *Christianity*, and seal'd it with their Blood. Of which it may suffice to give an account only of some few. Not to insist upon the *Saints* which *S. Paul* tells us were in *Nero's* Palace, we find many considerable Persons, and some of them near akin to the *Emperour* under the Reign of *Domitian*, (that cruel Prince and Persecutor of *Christians*) entertaining the Profession of the *Gospel*. And first let us hear the Account which *Dion Cassius* the Famous Historian gives us. He tells us, that about the latter end of *Domitian's* Reign he condemned many (some whereof were slain, others strip'd of their *Estates*) and amongst the rest *Flavius Clemens* the *Consul*, his own Cousin-german, and his Wife *Flavia Domitilla*, near akin also to the *Emperour*, upon pretence of *Atheism* (*ἑπινέχθη ἑγκλημα ἀθεότητος*.) and for that they had embrac'd the Rites and Religion of the
Jews.

Lib. 67. in
Domit. p.
776.

Part I. *Jews*. His Nephew *Clemens* he put to Death, his Wife *Domitilla* he banished into the Island *Pandateria*. Upon the same account also he put to death *Acilius Glabrio*, who together with *Trajan* had been *Consul* the Year before. That the persons here described were *Christians*, is plain, partly from the Charge of *Atheism* here fastened upon them (the common and familiar Accusation, and the Title given to *Christianity* by the Heathens, as we observ'd before) and partly because they are said to have passed over to the Rites and Customs of the *Jews*, nothing being more ordinary in the Historians of those times, than to mistake *Christians* for *Jews*, and to call them so, because both proceeding out of the same Country, *Christ* himself and his *Apostles* being *Jews* born, and his Religion first published and planted there. And that which may give some more Countenance to this is, that *Suetonius* speaking of *Domitian's* Condemning this *Fl. Clemens*, represents him as a man *contemptissimæ inertiae*, as a most contemptibly dull and sluggish person, which we know was generally charged upon the *Christians*, that they were an *useless* and *unactive* people, as we shall have

In Domitian. c. 15.
p. 303.

Ch.3. Primitive Christianity. 45

have occasion by and by more particularly to remark. Besides this *Fl. Domitilla*, the Wife of *Clemens*, there was another of the same Name, his Niece by the Sisters side, (unless *Dion Cassius* mistook, and put down *Wife* for *Niece*, which there's no reason to suppose, seeing both may very well consist together) who (as *Eusebius* informs us) was with many more banished by *Domitian* in the fifteenth year of his Reign into the Island *Pontia*, and there put to death for the Profession of *Christianity*; whose Persecutions and Martyrdoms (says he) are recorded by Heathen Writers themselves. Amongst whom (I suppose) he principally intends *Brettius* or *Brutius* the Historian, whom he cites elsewhere, and out of whom he there quotes this very Passage) *That under Domitian many of the Christians suffered Martyrdom, amongst whom was Fl. Domitilla, Niece by the Sisters side to Fl. Clemens the Consul, who for being a Christian was banished into the Island Pontia. She is said after a great deal of hard and tedious Usage, to have been burnt, together with the House wherein she was; her Memory celebrated in the Roman Calendar upon the seventh of May.*

Part I.

Hist. Eccl.
l. 3. c. 18.
p. 89.

Can. Chron.
ad An. Chr.
97. p. 208.
Gr. Chron.
p. 80. edit.
Græc.

Martyr.
Rom. ad p.
Maii.

Be-

Part I.

Besides these, we find that *Christianity* getting ground under the quiet Reign of the Emperour *Commodus*, many of the greatest Birth and Fortunes in *Rome*, together with their whole Families, flock'd over to the *Christian* Faith. Amongst whom was *Apollonius*; a man Famous for Philosophy and all Polite Humane Literature, who so gallantly pleaded his Cause before the *Senate*, and was himself a *Senator*, (as *St. Hierom* informs us. I shall but mention one Instance more, and that is of *Philip*, the Emperour, whom *Eusebius* expressly affirms to have been a *Christian*, and the first of the Emperours that was so, followed herein by a whole Troop both of Ancient and Modern Writers. Nay, we are told by some a formal Story, that this *Philip* and his Son were converted by the Preaching of *Pontius* the Martyr, and baptized by *Fabian* Bishop of *Rome*. But notwithstanding the Smoothness of the Story, and the number of Authorities, I must confess it seems to me scarcely probable, that a person of so bad a Life, guilty of such Enormous Villanies, as that Emperour was, should either be, or be thought a *Christian*; or if he was, that the whole World should not presently ring of

*Euseb. l. 5.
c. 21. p. 189.*

*De Script.
Eccl. in
Apoll.*

*Lib. 6. c. 34.
p. 232.*

*Act. Pont.
apud Sur.
ad 14. Maii
to 3.*

Ch.3. Primitive Christianity. 47

Part I.

of it. Certain I am, that all Historians of that time are wholly silent in the case, nor is there the least Intimation of any such thing in any Writer, either *Heathen* or *Christian*, before *Eusebius*. Nay, *Origen*, who wrote his Book in Defence of *Christianity* under the Reign of this very *Emperour*, and about this very time, (nay, and two Epistles, one to *Philip*, the other to his Wife *Severa*, if we may believe *Eusebius*) yet not only makes no mention of it, when it would have made greatly for his purpose, but tacitly implies there was no such thing. For *Celsus* reproving the boldness and petulancy of the *Christians*, as if they should give out, that if they could but bring over the present *Emperours* to their Religion, all other men would quickly be brought over; *Origen* point blank denies the Charge, and tells him there's no need of any Answer, for that none of the *Christians* ever said so. An Answer which surely he would not have given, had the *Emperour* at that time been a *Christian*. Not to insist upon many other Intimations which might be produc'd out of that Book against it. Besides, *Entropius* reports, that *Philip* and his Son being slain by the Souldiers, were yet
inter

Adv. Cels.

l. 8. p. 425.

Hist. Rom.

l. 9. non

longe ab

init.

Part I.

inter Divos relati, deified, or advanced into the number of their Gods. An Honour which 'tis certain the Senate would not have done them, had they either been, or but suspected to have been Christians. (To all which I may add, that

Lib. 6. c. 34. Eusebius (in whom the first Foot-steps of this Story appear) builds it upon no better a Foundation than a *κατέχει λόγῳ*, a bare Tradition and Report. That which seems to have given both Birth and colour to the Story is this:

Martyr.

*Eugen. apud
Syr. ad 25.
Decem.
tom. 6.*

One *Philippus*, an *Illustrious* Person under the Emperour *Severus*, was a long time Governour of *Ægypt*; he by the means of his Daughter *Eugenia* was converted to *Christianity*, under whose shelter, the *Christians* there enjoyed great peace and favour; (nay the Story adds, though certainly without any Ground, that he was created Bishop of *Alexandria*) till the Emperour, being acquainted with his being a Christian, presently remov'd him, and by the help of his Successor *Terentius*, caus'd him to be secretly murdered and made away. This (if any thing) was the rise of the Story; and that which makes it more probable is, the Honour and Excellency of that Employment, the greatest of all the Offices in

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in the *Roman* Empire, the command and Part I.
state little less than *regal* ; and therefore
the Emperours in their Letter to this
Philip (wherein they reproach him for
ingratitude and *apostasie*) tell him that in
a manner he was made a *King*, when he
was chosen *President* of *Ægypt*. Accord-
ingly the title of the Governour of *Æ-*
gypt (as appears from the *Historians*, but
especially the *Notitia Imperii*) was *Præ-*
fectus Augustalis ; and how easie was it
to mistake *Philippus Augustus* for *Philippus*
Augustalis ? But enough of this, as also the
falseness of that charge that the *Christi-*
ans were such a *sorry inconsiderable* people.

But however, let us suppose them to
have been as *mean* and *poor*, as the ma-
lice and cruelty of their adversaries did
endeavour to make them, yet this was
no real prejudice to their cause, nor
any great hurt to them. That the most
part of us are accused to be *poor* (*says*
Octavius in answer to Cæcilius his charge)
'tis not our *dishonor*, but our *Glory* ;
the mind, as 'tis dissolved by plenty and
luxury, so 'tis strengthned and girt
close by indigence and frugality ; and
yet how can that man be *poor*, who
wants not, who is not greedy of what's
another mans, who is rich in and towards

E

God?

Part. I.

God? that man is rather poor, who when he has a *great deal* desires *more*; the truth is, no man can be so poor, as he was when he was *born*: the *Birds* live without any Patrimony entail'd upon them, and the *Beasts* find pastures every day; and yet these are born for our use, all which we fully enjoy, when we do not *covet* them: much *lighter* and *happier* does he go to Heaven, who is not *burdened* by the way with an *unnecessary* load of Riches: and yet did we think *estates* so useful to us, we could beg them of God, who being *Lord* of all, might well afford a little to us; but we had rather *despise* them than *enjoy* them, and rather chase innocency and patience, desiring more to be *good* than to be *great* and *prodigal*. If we endure outward sufferings and tortures, 'tis not so much *pain* as 'tis a *warfare*; our courage is encreased by infirmities, and calamity is very oft the *discipline* of virtue; the *nerves* both of Body and Mind without exercise would grow loose and faint; and therefore God is neither *unable* to help us, nor yet *negligent* of us, as being the Governour of the World and the *Father* of his Children; but *tries* and examines every ones temper in an adverse

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adverse state, as *Gold is tryed in the Part I. fire.* Besides it must needs be a sight very pleasing to God, to behold a *Christian* conflicting with grief and misery, preparing himself to *encounter* threatnings and torments pressing in upon the very noise of *Death*, and the horror of the Executioner, maintaining his liberty against Kings and Princes, and only yielding to God, whose he wholly is, coming off from all the attempts of adversity with victory and triumph. So argues that *excellent person* (and who ever reads him in his *native* Language must confess it) with equal strength of *eloquence and reason*, where he also briefly touches that *objection* so common amongst the Heathens, that if *Christians* were so dear to God, why then did he suffer them to be oppressed with so many miseries and troubles, and not come in to vindicate and relieve them: an argument fully cleared by *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, and other ancient *Apologists* for the Christian Faith.

But this was not all, they were charged as a very *useless* and *unserviceable* Arnob. adv. gent. l. 2. prop. fin. Lactant. l. 5. de justit. c. 22. people, that contributed nothing to the happiness of the Common-wealth; nay, as *destructive* and *pernicious* to humane E 2 society,

Part I. society, and as the Procuring cause of all those mischiefs and calamities that befell the world. In answer to the first, their being *useless* as to the common good, hear what *Tertullian* says in the case; how can this be (*says he*) when we live amongst you, have the same diet, habit, manner, and way of life? we are no *Brachmans* or *Indian Gymnosophists*, who live in Woods, and banish themselves from all civil life: we are not unmindful of what we owe to our great Creator, and therefore despise none of his Creatures, though careful to use them with temperance and sobriety; wherefore we live not in the World without the use of your *Markets, Shambles, Bathes, Taverns, Shops, Stables, your Marts*, and other ways of humane commerce; we go to Sea with you, bear Arms, till and improve the ground, use merchandize, we undergo Trades amongst you, and expose our works to your use; and how then we can seem *unserviceable* to your affairs, with which and by which we live, I see not. Certainly (*says he*) if any have cause truly to complain of our being unprofitable, they are *Bawds, Panders, Pimps, Hectors, and Ruffians, Sellers of Poyson, Magicians,*
South-

Apoc. 42.
P. 33.

Ib. c. 43.

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53

Southsayers, Wizards and Astrologers : Part I.

and to be *unserviceable* to these, is the greatest *serviceableness*. But besides this, they pleaded for themselves, that their Religion was highly *beneficial* to the world, and in its own nature contributed to the peace and happiness of mankind. It cannot be denied but that some of the *Primitive Christians* were shie of engaging in *Wars*, and not very forward to undergo publick places of *authority* and *power* ; but (besides that this was only the *opinion* of some *private persons*, and not the common and current practice or determination of the *Church*) it arose partly from some mistaken passages in the *Gospel*, turning *Evangelical Counsels* into *positive precepts* ; but principally because such *Offices* and *Employments* were usually clogg'd with such circumstances and conditions, as obliged them to some things repugnant to the Christian Law : otherwise where they could do it, without offering violence to their Religion and their Conscience, they shun'd it not, but frequently bore *Arms*, and discharged such Publick Offices as were committed to them, as cannot be unknown to any that are never so little vers'd in the *Hi-*

Part I. *story of the first Ages of the Church:* never were there better, more faithful and resolute *Souldiers*, more obedient to the Orders of their Commanders, more ready to attempt the most hazardous enterprises, never boggling at any thing which they could do without sin : of which, amongst many others, I shall instance only in that of the *Thebean Legion*, who being commanded upon a bloody and unlawful butchery, to destroy and cut off the *Christians*, their brethren, meekly returned this answer to the Heathen Emperour *Maximianus*, under whom they served; We offer our *hands* against any enemy, but count it unlawful to embroe them in the blood of the *innocent* : our Swords know how to strike a *Rebel* or an Enemy, but not to wound those who are *Citizens and guiltless* ; we remember that we took up Arms for, not against friends and fellow Citizens : we have always fought for justice and piety, and for the safety of the innocent ; these have been hitherto the price of those dangers that we have run upon ; we have fought for fidelity, which how shall we be able to keep to *you*, if we do not first keep it to *our God* ? So far were the Christians of those times from refusing to engage in the

Martyrol.
Adonis ad
X. Kalend.
Octob.

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the service of their Prince. Nay those Part 1.
of them who were so bound up by their
private sentiments, as not to think it
lawful, yet reckoned they otherways
made *equivalent* compensation: thus
when *Celsus* press'd the Christians to un-
dergo publick Offices, and to help the
Emperours in their Wars; *Origen* an-
swers, that they did so, though by a *di-*
vine not *humane* help, by praying for *Adv. Cels.*
their persons, and their prosperity and *l. 8. p. 426,*
success; above all men (*says he*) we fight *427.*
for the Emperour, while we train our
selves in exercises of piety, and contend
by prayers for him. But besides these,
there were several other instances which
the Christians pleaded to vindicate them-
selves from being *unserviceable* to the
good of mankind, amongst which I shall
at present take notice only of these
two.

First, that they really fought to re-
claim men from *vice* and *sin*, to a good
and a virtuous life; by which means
(besides that they provided for mens
highest and nearest *interest*, the interest
of their souls, and their eternal happi-
ness in another life) they greatly con-
sulted the peace and welfare of the pla-
ces where they lived; for virtuous and

Part 1. wicked men are the *pests* and *plagues* of humane society, that taint and infect others by their bad examples or persuasions, and entail vengeance upon the places of their residence ; whilst good men engage the favour and blessing of heaven, and both by their Counsels and examples bring over others to sobriety and virtue,, whereby they establish and strengthen the foundations of Government, and the happiness of civil life. And none so eminent for this as the Christians of old ; this is the great *triumphant* argument wherewith *Origen* at every turn exalts the honour of *Christianity* ; this (*says he*) we find in the multitudes of those that believe, who are delivered from that sink of vices, wherein before they were wont to wallow : enquire into the lives of some of us, compare our former and our present course, and you'll find in what filthiness and impieties they tumbled, before they entertained the *Christian Doctrine* ; but since the time that they entered into it, how gentle and moderate, how grave and constant are they become, and some so inflam'd with the love and purity, that they forbear even what lawfully they might enjoy ; how largely are the Churches

*Adv. Cels.
lib. 1. c. 9.*

Ib. p. 21.

Ib. p. 53.

Ch. 7. **Primitive Christianity.** 57

Churches of God, founded by *Christ*, Part I.

spread over all Nations, consisting of such as are converted from innumerable evil ways to a better mind. And elsewhere vindicating the Doctrine of *Christ*, from the mischievous cavils of his adversary, he tells us how 'twas impossible that could be pestilent and hurtful, which had converted so many from their vices and debaucheries, to a course most agreeable to Nature and Reason, and to a life of temperance and all other virtues: and the same he urges frequently in other places, and what greater kindness and benefit could be done to men? Does *Celsus* call upon us (*says he*) to bear Offices for the good of our Country; let him know that the Country is much more beholden to Christians than to the rest of men, while they teach men piety towards God, the tutelar Guardian of the Country, and shew them the way to that heavenly City that is above, which they that live well may attain to, though here they dwell in the smallest City in the world. Nor do the Christians thus employ themselves because they shun the publick Offices of the civil life; but only reserve themselves for the more divine and necessary

Lib. 2. p. 78.

Lib. 8.

p. 427.

ib. p. 428.

Part I. cessary services of the Church, in order to the good and happiness of men ; for this they think very just and reasonable, that they should take care of all men; of them of their own party, that they may every day make them better ; of others, that they may draw them to the belief and practice of piety and Religion, that so worshipping God in truth, and doing what they can to instruct others, they may be united to the great God, and to his blessed Son, who is the wisdom, truth, and righteousness, and by whom it is that every one is converted to a pious and a Religious life.

*De curand.
Græc. affe-
ctib. Serm.
9. de Leg.
p. 128.*

Theodoret discoursing against the *Gentiles*, of the excellency of the laws of *Christ*, above any that were given by the best Philosophers or wisest men amongst the Heathens, gives them instances of whole Nations whom Christianity had brought off from the most brutish and savage manners, he tells them of the *Persians*, who by the Laws given them by *Zarada*, lived in incestuous mixtures with their own *Mothers*, *Sisters*, and *Daughters*, looking upon it as a lawful and warrantable practice; till entertaining *Christianity*, they threw off those abominable Laws, and submitted to that tempe-

temperance and chastity which the Go-Part 1.
spel requires of us. And whereas before
they were wont to cast out the bodies
of their dead to be devoured by Beasts
and Birds of prey, since they embraced
the *Christian* Religion, they abstained
from that piece of inhumanity, and de-
cently committed them to the earth;
from which they could not be restrain-
ed, either by the Laws of their Country,
or the bitterness of those torments which
they underwent. The *Massagetes* who
thought it the most miserable thing in
the world to *dye* any other then a vio-
lent death, and therefore made a Law
that all persons arrived to old age should
be offered in Sacrifice and eaten, no
sooner submitted to *Christianity*, but ab-
horred those barbarous and abominable
Customs. The *Tibarens*, who used to
throw Aged persons down the steepest
Rocks, left it off upon their embracing
of the *Gospel*. Upon the same account
the *Hyr cani* and the *Caspians* reformed
their manners, who were formerly wont
to keep dogs on purpose to devour the
bodies of the dead. Nor did the *Scy-*
thians any longer together with their
dead bury those alive who had been
their nearest friends and kindred. So
great

60 **Primitive Christianity.** Ch. 3.

Part I. great a change (*says my Author*) did the Laws of *Christ* make in the manners of men, and so easily were the most barbarous Nations perswaded to entertain them, a thing which *Plato*, though the best of all Philosophers, could never effect amongst the *Athenians*, his own Fellow Citizens, who could never induce them to govern the Common-wealth according to those Laws and Institutions which he had prescribed them.

Nay, where the Gospel did not produce this effect to reclaim men from their vices and vanities, and to bring them over to the Religion of the crucified Saviour; yet had it this excellent influence upon the world, that It generally taught them better lessons, refin'd their understandings, and filled their minds with more useful and practical notions about Religion than they had before. To which purpose it's mainly observable, that those *Philosophers* who lived in the time of *Christianity*, after the Gospel publicly appeared in the world, wrote in a much more *divine strain*, entertained more honourable and worthy sentiments about God and Religion, and the duties of men in their several capacities, than those of their Sect that went before them.

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them. Of which I conceive no account Part. 1.
 can be given so satisfactory as this, that
 the *genius* and spirit of the Gospel be-
 gan then to fly abroad, and to breathe
 in a freer air, and so could not but leave
 some tincture and savour upon the spi-
 rits of men, though its most inveterate
 Enemies. Besides that many of them
 did more nearly converse with the Wri-
 tings of *Christianity*, which they read
 either out of *curiosity*, or with a *design* to
 confute and answer them. This doubt-
 less sharpened the edge of their under-
 standings, and furnished them with bet-
 ter notions, more useful precepts and
 rules of life, than are to be met with
 in any of the old Philosophers: witness
 those excellent and uncommon strains of
 piety that run through the Writings of *Se-
 neca*, *Epicetus*, *Antoninus*, *Arrian*, *Plu-
 tarch*, *Hierocles*, *Plotinus*, and the rest
 that lived in those first Ages of the Gos-
 pel: of which I could give considerable
 instances, were it necessary to my purpose.
 I shall only as a *specimen*, set down that
Prayer wherewith *Simplicius* (Enemy e-
 nough to *Christianity*) concludes his
 Comment upon *Epicetus*; and thus he
 makes his address to God.

Μετὰ δὴ
 τῶ σωτῆ-
 ρι ἡμῶν
 ὁπρωθεν
 ἔπει χυ-
 μῶσι, ἡ
 Χριστιαν-
 κῆς θεο-
 λογίας
 πολλὰ τοῖς
 ἀνέμοις
 ἀνέμειξαν
 λόγους.
 Theod. de
 Cur. Græc.
 Aff. Serm.
 2. de prin-
 cip. p. 33.

Part I.

Pag. 331.

Ἰκετεύω σε, Δέσποτα,
 τὸ πατὴρ καὶ ἡγεμὼν
 τῶ ἐν ἡμῖν λόγε, ὑπο-
 μνησθῆναι μὲν ἡμᾶς τῆς
 ἐαυτοῦ ἐυγενείας ἧς ἡξιώ-
 θημεν, καὶ σε, Συμπαρά-
 ξαι ὅς αὐτοκινήτοις ἡμῶν
 πρὸς τε κἀδαρσιν πῶ ἀπο-
 τῆ σωματικῆ καὶ τοῦ ἀλύ-
 ρων παθῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὸ
 ὑπερέχον καὶ ἀρχὴν αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ ὡς ὀργάνοις χρησθῆναι
 καὶ τὸ παρρησιόχα τέλειον
 καὶ πρὸς διόρθωσιν ἀκραι-
 ῶν τῶ ἐν ἡμῖν λόγε καὶ
 ἐνωσιν αὐτῶ πρὸς τὰ ὄν-
 τως ὄντα διὰ τῆ τῆς ἀλη-
 θείας φωτὸς. Καὶ τὸ τελί-
 ον, ὃ σωτῆρα ἱκετεύω,
 ἀφελῆν τελείως πῶ ἀ-
 χλὺν τοῦ ψυχικῶν ἡμῶν
 οὐμάτων, Ὅρα γινώ-
 σκομεν εἶναι (καὶ τὸ Ὁμν-
 εον) ἢ μὲν θεόν, ἥδε καὶ
 ἀνδρα.

I Beseech thee, O
 Lord, thou that
 art the Father and
 guide of our rational
 Powers, grant that
 we may be mindful of
 those Noble and Ge-
 nerous Natures with
 which thou hast invest-
 ed us; & assist us that
 as Persons endued with
 self-moving Princi-
 ples, we may cleanse
 our selves from all bo-
 dily and brutish passi-
 ons, that we may sub-
 due and govern them,
 and in a due and de-
 cent manner use them
 only as Organs and
 Instruments. Help us
 through the Light of
 the Truth, accurately
 to correct our Reason,
 and unite it to those

things that have a real existence. And in
 the third place, I beseech my Saviour, that
 he would perfectly dispell the mist that is
 before the eyes of our Minds, that ac-
 cording

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According to that of the Poet, we may rightly understand what belongs either to God or man.

Besides the *matter* of this Prayer, which is very *sublime* and *spiritual*, the *manner* of its composition is considerable, consisting of *three parts*, and those addressed as it were to *three persons*, answerable to those in the *blest Trinity*, the *Lord* (or *Father*) the *Saviour* (or *Christ*) and the *light of truth* (which even in Scripture is a common *Periphrasis* of the *Holy Spirit* :) whether he intended this, I will not say, sure I am it looks very like it. But enough of this.

Secondly, That they ordinarily wrought such *miracles* as were incomparably *beneficial* to the world, in curing *diseases*, raising the *dead*, and rescuing possessed persons from the merciless rage and cruelty of the *Devil*: we may observe that in those *primitive* times there were innumerable multitudes of possessed persons, beyond what were in the Ages either before or since ; the Divine Providence doubtless permitting it to be so, that by this means there might be a fairer occasion of commending *Christianity* to the world ; and there

is

Part. I. is nothing which we more commonly meet with in the Writings of the ancient Fathers, than testimonies concerning their triumphant power over evil spirits: *Justin Martyr* discoursing of the end of *Christ's* coming into the world, for the salvation of men, and the subversion of Devils, tells the *Senate*; that these things are so, you may know by what is done before your eyes; for many that were possessed by Devils, throughout the whole world, and even in *this City* of yours, whom all your *Inchanters, Sorcerers, and Conjurers* were not able to cure, many of us *Christians* adjuring them by the name of *Jesus Christ*, who was crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, have perfectly cured, and do still cure, disarming and driving out of men those *Demons* that had seized upon them; and the same he affirms more than once and again in his discourse with *Trypho the Jew*. *Irenæus* arguing against the Hereticks, tells us, that the true Disciples of Christ did in his name many strange things for the good of others, according as every one had received his gift, some so signally expelling Devils, that those out of whom they were cast came over to the Faith; others foretelling

Apol. 1.
p. 45.

Adv. heres.
lib. 2. c. 57.
p. 218.

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telling Future Events: others curing men Part. I.
of the most grievous Distempers, by putting their Hands upon them, and restoring them to their former Health: many that have been raised from the dead, and afterwards lived many years amongst us. And indeed, innumerable (says he) are the Gifts which God has every where bestowed upon his Church, whereby, in the Name of the Crucified *Jesus*, many and great Miracles are daily done, to the great advantage of the World. *Tertullian* ap- *Ad Scap.*
peals to the Heathens, as a thing com- *c. 2. p. 69.*
monly known amongst them, that they daily restrained the *power of Devils*, and cast them out of men. And he tells *Sca-* *Ib. c. 4. p. 71.*
pula the *President*, that he might be satisfied of this from his own *Records*, and those very Advocates who had themselves reaped this benefit from *Christians*: as for Instance, a certain *Notary*, and the Kinsman and Child of another; besides divers other Persons of Note and Quality, (not to speak of the Meaner sort) who had been recovered either from Devils or from desperate Diseases. Nay, *Severus* the Father of *Antoninus* having been cured by being anointed with Oyl by *Proculus* a Christian, he kept him in his Palace till his Death; whom *Anto-*
F *ninus*

Part 1. *ninus* knew well, having been himself nursed by a *Christian*. And in his *Apolo-logy* he challenges the Heathens to produce any possessed Person before the Publick Tribunals, and the Evil Spirit being commanded by any *Christian* shall then as truly confess himself to be a *Devil*, as at other times he falsely boasts himself to be a *God*. And elsewhere putting the case that the *Christians* should agree to retire out of the *Roman Empire*, he asks them what Protection they would then have left against the secret and invisible Attempts of Devils, who made such havock both of their Souls and Bodies, whom the Christians so freely expelled and drove out; that it would be a sufficient piece of Revenge, that hereby they should leave them open to the uncontrolled Possession of those Evil Spirits. 'Twere endless to produce all the Testimonies of this Nature, that might be fetch'd from *Origen*, *Minutius Felix*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, and all the old Apologists for the Christian Religion, (some whereof I have briefly noted in the Margin) who constantly pleaded this as a mighty and uncontrollable Argument of the Truth and Divinity of their Religion, and of their

Apol. c. 37.
p. 30.

(Orig. contr.

C. l. 1. p. 5,

7, 53. l. 3. p.

124. l. 7. f.

334. 376.

Cypr. ep. ad

Donat. p. 3.

ad Demetri-

an. p. 201,

206.

Min. Fel.

p. 23.

Arnob. adv.

gent. l. 1.

p. 13.

Lact. de gr.

error. l. 2.

c. 15. p. 220.

Euseb. de-

monstr.

Evang. l. 3.

p. 132.

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their great Usefulness to Mankind ; nay, **Part I.**
 this Miraculous Power continued in the
 Church some considerable time after *Con-*
stantine and the World was become *Chri-*
stian, as appears from *S. Basil*, *Nazianzen*, *Naz. Or. 1.*
 and others : and though I do not give *Apol. p. 35.*
 heed to all the Miracles which are report- *Aug. de C.*
 ed by *S. Hierom* in the Lives of *Hilarion*, *p. 1339.*
Paulus, and some others ; or by *Palladius* *Greg. Nyss.*
 in his *Historia Lausiac* ; yet doubtless ma- *Or. in suam*
 ny of them were very true and real ; God *ordinat. to.*
 withdrawing this Extraordinary Power *1. p. 876.*
 as Christianity gained faster footing in *Athanas. de*
 the World, and leaving the Church to *incarn. Verb.*
 those standing Methods by which it was *p. 74.*
 to be managed and governed to the end
 of the World.

And yet notwithstanding the Case was
 thus plain and evident, how much the
 World was beholden to *Christians*, yet
 were they looked upon as the *pests* of
 Humane Society, counted and called the *Ap. c. 37.*
common Enemies of Mankind, as *Tertullian* *p. 30.*
 complains ; that they were the Causes of
 all Publick Calamities, and that for their
 sakes it was that Vengeance did so often
 remarkably haunt the *Roman Empire*. This
 was the common Out-cry : If the *City* be *Ib. c. 1. p. 2.*
 besieged, (says *Tertullian*) if any thing
 happen ill in the *Fields*, in the *Garrisons*,

Part I.

Ib. c. 40.

p. 32.

*Cypr. ad**Demetr.*

p. 197.

*Arnob. adv.
gent. l. 1. p. 1.*

in the *Islands*, presently they cry out 'Tis because of the *Christians*. They conspire the ruine of Good men, and thirst after the Blood of the Innocent, patronizing their Hatred with this vain pretence, That the *Christians* are the Cause of all publick Misfortunes and Calamities. If *Tiber* overflow the Walls, if the *Nile* do not (as 'tis wont) overflow the Fields, if the *Heaven* do not keep its accustomed Course, if an *Earth-quake* happen, if a *Famine*, or a *Plague*, presently the Cry is, *Away with the Christians to the Lions*. Thus *Demetrian* the *Proconsul* of *Africk* objected to *S. Cyprian*, that they might thank the *Christians*, that Wars did oftner arise, that Plagues and Famines did rage so much, and that Immoderate and Excessive Rains hindred the Kindly Seasons of the Year. The same *Arnobius* tells us, the Heathens were wont to object at every turn, and to conclude it as sure as if it had been dictated by an *Oracle*, that since the *Christians* appeared in the World, the World had been well-nigh undone, Mankind has been over-run with infinite kinds of Evils; and the very Gods themselves had withdrawn that Solemn Care and Providence, wherewith they were wont to

fu-

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

53

superintend Humane Affairs. Nay, so hot Part I.
and common was this Charge amongst the
Pagans, that when the *Goths* and *Van-*
dals broke in upon the *Roman Empire*,
S. Augustine was forced to write those *Aid. Re-*
excellent Books *De Civit. Dei*, purposely *tractat. l. 2.*
to stop the Mouth of this Objection, *c. 43. to. 1.*
as upon the same account and at his Re-
quest *Orosius* wrote his Seven Books of *P. Oros.*
History against the *Pagans*. Omitting *Pres. ad lib.*
some of the *Answers* given by the Fa- *Hist. ad D.*
thers, (as being probably less solid, and *Aug.*
not so proper in this Case; such as, that
'twas no wonder if Miseries happened,
and things grew worse in this *old age* of
Time, the World daily growing more
feeble and decrepit; and that these
things had been *foretold by God*, and
therefore must necessarily come to pass;
two Arguments largely and strongly
pleaded by *S. Cyprian*, that those Evils *Ad Demet.*
were properly resolvable into Natural *p. 198, 199.*
Causes; and that every thing is not pre-
sently *evil*, because it crosses our Ease and
Interest, as *Arnobius* answers. Passing by *Arnob. ut*
these) I shall take notice only of two *supra. p. 4.*
things which the *Christians* pleaded in
this case.

First, That the *Gentiles* should do ve-
ry well to seek the *true causes* of these
F 3 things

Part I.

things nearer home, and to enquire whether 'twas not for their own sakes, that the Divine Providence was thus offended with them; there being very just Reasons to think so. *Tertullian* points them to such Causes as these: First, their horrible *affronting* their *Natural Notions* of God, that *when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkened, and they changed the Glory of the Uncorruptible God into an Image made like to Corruptible Man, and to Birds, and Four-footed Beasts, and Creeping things, as S. Paul had told them long before.* And that therefore 'twas reasonable to suppose, that God was more angry with them, who instead of him, worshipped pieces of *Wood* and *Statues*, or at best *Genii* and *Devils*, than with those who sincerely paid their Adorations to him alone. Secondly, passing by God the great Master of all Goodness and Innocence, and the severe Revenger of all Impiety, they tumbled themselves in all manner of Vice and Wickedness; and what wonder if the Divine Justice followed close at their Heels? You are angry (says *Cyprian*) that God is angry,

Ap. c. 40.
p. 33.

Rom. I. 21,
22, 23.

Ap. c. 41.
vid. Arnob.
l. I. p. 6, 7.

Ut supra p.
199, 200.

as if in living *ill* you deserved *well*, and Part I.
as if all that has happened to you were
not *less* and *lighter* than your Sins. And
thou *Demetrian*, who art a Judge of
others, be in this a Judge of thy *self*, in-
spect the Retirements of thy Conscience,
and behold thy self now, who shalt one
day be seen Naked by all; and thou
wilt find thy self enslav'd and led captive
by some Sins or other; and why then
shouldst thou wonder that the Flames
of the Divine Anger should rise higher,
when the Sins of men do daily admini-
ster more fuel to it? An Answer which
he there prosecutes to very excellent
purpose. Thirdly, their prodigious Un-
thankfulness to God for all the former
Blessings they had received from him.
So far as they were *ingrateful*, they were
highly *guilty*, and God could not but
punish them. Had they sought him,
whom in part they could not but know,
and been Observant of him, they would
in this case have found him a much more
Propitious than an Angry Deity, as *Ter-*
tullian tells them. Upon these, and
such like accounts they might well con-
clude it was, that the Vengeance of God
did press so hard upon them, and that
therefore they had no true reason to

Part I. lay the fault at any other door but their own.

Secondly, as to the thing it self, as 'twas charged upon them, they point blank denied it to be true, and that for two Reasons especially.

Ap. c. 40.
p. 32.

First, because the World had been sadly and frequently *pestered* with such *evils* and *miseries* long before the *Christian Religion* appeared in it. I pray (says *Tertullian*) what Miseries did overwhelm all the World, and even *Rome* it self, before the Times of *Tiberius*, i. e. before the Coming of *Christ*? Have we not read of *Hierapolis*, and the Islands of *Delos*, and *Rhodes*, and *Cos*, destroyed with many thousands of Men? Does not *Plato* speak of the greatest part of *Asia* and *Africk* *swallowed up* by the *Atlantic* Sea? An Earthquake drank up the *Corinthian* Sea, and the force of the *Ocean* rent off *Sicilia* from *Italy*. Not to ask where were the *Christians*, the great Contemners of your Gods; but where were *your Gods* themselves when the Flood over-ran the World? *Palestine* had not yet received the *Jewish* Nation out of *Ægypt*, much less had the *Christians* sate down there when *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and the Adjacent parts, were burnt

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burnt up by a shower of *Fire* and *Brimstone*, of which the Country smells to this day. Nor could *Tuscia* and *Campania* complain of the *Christians*, when a Fire from Heaven destroyed the *Vulturni* and the *Pompeii*. None as yet worshipped the True God at *Rome*, when *Hannibal* at *Cannæ* made such a Slaughter of the *Romans*, that the very *Rings* that he took (*which were the Honourable Badges of none but Roman Knights*) were measured by the *Busshel*. They were all your Gods that then had the General Worship, when the *Gauls* took the *Capitol* it self. So smartly does that grave man retort their own Arguments upon themselves. *Arnobius* fully and elegantly pursues Lib. I. this, that *in this respect the Former Times* P. 2, 3. *were no better than these*, which they so much complained of, and bids them run over the *Annals* and *Records* that were written in all Languages, and they would find that all Nations had frequently had their Common Miseries and Devastations. The clearing of which, was likewise the great design *Orosius* proposed to him- Prefat. ut supra. p. 2. self, in drawing down the History of the World through all the Ages and Generations of it.

Secondly, because since the coming of
Chri-

Part I.

Christianity, the World had been in a better and more *prosperous* state than it was before, especially whenever the Christian Religion met with any favour and encouragement. The reason of it

Apol. c. 40. Tertullian gives: Although we should compare present with former Miseries, yet they are much lighter now, since God sent *Christians* into the World; for since then Innocency has *balanced* the Iniquities of the Age, and there have been many who have *interceded* with Hea-

Quest. 126. P. 476.

ven. The *Author* of the *Questions* and *Answers* in *Justin Martyr* (for that it was not *Justin* himself, I think no man can doubt that reads him, the man betraying himself openly enough to have liv'd in the Times of *prevailing Christianity*) putting this Question, Whether *Paganism* was not the better Religion, forasmuch as under it there was great Prosperity and Abundance; whereas 'twas quite otherwise since *Christianity* came in fashion; He answers among other things, That (besides that plenty was no Argument of the goodness of any Religion, Christians being to be judged of rather by the *holiness* than the *prosperity* of their Religion) there was so much the more Abundance in these Times of *Christianity*,

by

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by how much there were fewer Wars, Part I.
 than was while *Paganism* governed the
 World. Never were Wars more success-
 fully managed, never was Prosperity
 more Triumphant, than when Christians
 met with kind Entertainment. *Melito*,
 Bishop of *Sardis*, in an *Oration* which
 he presented to the Emperour *M. Anto-*
ninus in behalf of the Christians (part
 whereof is yet extant in *Eusebius*) tells
 him that *Christianity* commencing under
 the Reign of *Augustus*, was a good omen
 of the Prosperity of the Empire, and
 that ever since, the *Majesty* of the *Roman*
Empire had increased. Of whom he be-
 ing the Heir and Successor, he could
 not better assure it to himself and his
 Son, than by protecting that Religion
 that had been born and bred up toge-
 ther with the Empire, and for which,
 his Ancestors amongst other Religions
 had had an Esteem and Honour. That
 there could be no better Argument that
 this Religion contributed to the Happi-
 ness of the Empire, (with which it be-
 gan and had grown up) than that since
 the Reign of *Augustus* no Misfortune,
 but on the contrary (according to all
 mens Wishes) every thing had happened
 to be Magnificent and Prosperous. Hence

*Euseb. Eccl.
 Hist. l. 4.
 c. 2. 6.
 p. 148.*

Eu-

96
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Part I. *Eusebius* notes once and again, that the
Vid. ib. l. 7. Affairs of the Empire commonly flourish-
c. 1. l. 8. ed while Christianity was protected, but
A 13. when that was persecuted, things began
De Martyr. to go to rack, and their Ancient Peace
Palast. c. 3. and Prosperity could not be retrieved,
p. 322. till Peace and Tranquillity was restored
Ad Demet. to the Christians. Therefore *Cyprian* tells
p. 206. the *Proconsul*, that their Cruelty to the
 Christians was one of those Crying Sins
 that had provoked God to inflict so ma-
 ny heavy Miseries upon them, not only
 refusing to worship God themselves, but
 unjustly persecuted those Innocent per-
 sons that did with all the methods of Rage
 and Fierceness. So little hand had the
 Christians in entailing Vengeance upon
 the World, that their Enemies rather
 wilfully pull'd it down upon their own
 heads.

CHAP. IV.

The Charges brought against
them respecting their Life
and Manners.

The Primitive Christians accused of the grossest Sins, Sacrilege, Sedition, Treason, Incest, Murder, &c. The particular Consideration of these referred to their proper places. What they offered in the general for their Vindication considered. They openly asserted their Innocency, and appealed to the known Piety of their Lives. None accounted Christians, however eminent in Profession, unless their Lives answerable. Their Abstaining from Appearance of Evil, or Doing any thing that symbolized with the Idolatrous Rites of the Heathens. Their being willing to be brought to the strictest Tryal, and to be severely punished, if found guilty of those Crimes. Their Complaints of being (generally) condemned merely for bearing the Name of Christians. They greatly gloried in that Title. This Name prohibited by Julian, and Christians commanded in scorn
to

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to be called Galileans. The Christians appealed for their Vindication to the Consciences of their Impartial Enemies, and by them acquitted. The Testimonies of Pliny, Ser. Granianus, Antoninus Pius, M. Antoninus, Trypho the Jew, and Apollo's Oracle to this purpose. The Excellency of Christians if compared with the best of Heathens. All such disowned for Christians as did not exactly conform to the Rule and Discipline of Christianity.

ALL the Attempts that had been hitherto made against the Honour and Reputation of Christians, seemed but like the *first Skirmishings* of an Army, in respect of the main *Battalia* that was yet behind, the Charge that was made against their **Moral Carriage and behaviour**; and here they were accused at every turn of no less than *Sacrilege, Sedition, and High Treason, of Incest and Promiscuous Mixtures, of Murder, and Eating the flesh of Infants* at their Sacramental Feasts. These were sad and horrid Crimes, and (had they been true) would justly have made Christianity stink in the Nostrils of all Sober and Considering men: but they were as *false* as they

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they were *black* and *hellish*. The particular Answers to these Charges (together with some things relating to matters of Worship) shall be considered hereafter, (according as they fall in their more proper places: I shall only at present take notice of the General Vindication which the Christians made of themselves, from these Indictments that were brought in against them; and the sum of what they pleaded lies especially in these three things.

First, They did openly assert and maintain their *innocency*, and shew by their *Lives* as well as their *Apologies*, that they were Men of quite another Make and Temper than their Enemies did generally represent them. Their Religion and way of Life was admired by all. Who (says S. Clement to the *Corinthians*) Clem. ep. ad Corinth. p. 2. 4. did ever dwell amongst you, that did not approve of your Excellent and Unshaken Faith? that did not wonder at your sober and moderate Piety in Christ? You were forward to every good work, adorned with a most Vertuous and Venerable Conversation, doing all things in the Fear of God, and having his Laws and Commands written upon the Tables of your Hearts. They placed Religion
then

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Part I. then not in *talking finely*, but in *living well*. Amongst us (says *Athenagoras*) the meanest and most Mechanick Persons, and Old Women, although not able to *discourse* and *dispute* for the Usefulness of their Profession, do yet demonstrate it in their Lives and Actions: they don't indeed critically weigh their *words*, and recite Elegant *Oration*s, but they manifest *honest* and *virtuous* Actions; while being buffeted they strike not again, nor sue them at Law that spoil and plunder them; *Liberally give to them that ask, and love their Neighbours as themselves*. And this we do because we are assured that there is a God that superintends Humane Affairs, who made both us and the whole World; and because we must give to him an account of all the Transactions of our Lives, therefore we chuse the most Moderate, Humane, and Benign, and (to many) the most Contemptible Course of Life; for we reckon that no Evil in this Life can be so great, though we should be called to lay down our Lives, which ought to be esteemed little and of no value in comparison of that Happiness which we hereafter look for from the Great Judge of the World, promised to those who are of
an

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an Humble, Benign, and Moderate Con-
 versation. *Clemens of Alexandria* gives
 us this short-account of them ; As the
 fairest possession we give up our selves
 to God, entirely loving him, and rec-
 koning this the great business of our
 Lives. No man is with us a *Christian*, or
 accounted truly Rich, Temperate, and
 Generous, but he that is Pious and Re-
 ligious ; nor does any further bear the
 Image of God, than he speaks and be-
 lieves what is just and holy. *So that this*
in short is the state of us who follow God :
 such as are our *desires*, such are our *dis-*
courses ; such as are our *discourses*, such
 are our *actions* ; such as are our *actions*,
 such is our *life*: so universally good is
 the whole Life of *Christians*. Certainly
 none were ever greater Enemies to a
 Naked Profession, and the covering a
 bad Life under the Title of *Christianity*.
 Do any live otherwise than *Christ* hath
 commanded, 'tis a most certain Argu-
 ment they are no *Christians*, though with
 their Tongues they never so smoothly
 profess the Christian Doctrine ; for 'tis
 not *meer Professors*, but those who live
 according to their Profession, that shall
 be saved, as *Justin Martyr* declares be-
 fore the *Emperours*. Let no man (says
 Ba-

Part I.

Admonit.
ad genu. p.
76.

Ap. 2. p. 63.

Part I. *Basil*) impose upon himself with inconsiderate Words, saying, Though I be a *Comment.* *in c. 1. Esa.* *sin*ner, yet I am a *Christian*, and I hope that Title will be my shelter. But hear-
to. 2. p. 28. ken, *sin*ner, all wicked men shall be bundled up together, and in the great day of the Divine Vengeance, shall be indifferently thrown into those merciless and devouring Flames.

Nay, so careful were they to avoid all Sin, that they stood at a wide distance from any thing that (though lawful in it self, yet) seemed to carry an *ill colour* with it. This, *Origen* tells *Celsus*, was the reason why they refused to do any Honour to an Image, lest thereby they should give occasion to others to think that they ascribed Divinity to them. For this Reason they shunn'd all *community* with the Rites and Customs of the Heathens, *abstaining from things strangled*, or that had been *offered to Idols*, from frequenting the *publick Baths*, or going to the *Sights* and *Shows*, because they seemed to owe their Original to *Idolatry*, and were the occasion of many gross Enormities. They refused to wear *Crowns of Lawrel*, lest they should seem to patronize the Custom of the *Gentiles*, who were wont to do so in their Sacred
 and

and Solemn Rites, as appeared eminent-ly in the Solemnities of the Emperours *Severus* and *Caracalla*, when the *Tribune* delivered the *Donative* to the Souldiers, and all came to receive it with Crowns upon their *heads*, one of them brought his in his Hand, and being demanded the Reason, answered that he was a *Christian*, and could not do it. Which was the occasion of *Tertullian's* Book *De Corona Militis*, wherein he sets himself to defend it.

Secondly, they were willing to put themselves upon the *strictest* Tryal, and to undergo the *severest* Penalties, if found Guilty of those Crimes that were charged upon them. So their *Apologist* Just. Mart. Ap. 2. p. 54. bespeaks the *Emperours*: We beseech you (says he) that those things that are charged upon the *Christians* may be enquired into, and if they be found to be so, let them have their deserved Punishment, nay, let them be more severely punished than other men: but if not Guilty, then 'tis not reasonable, that Innocent Persons should suffer merely upon Report and Clamour. And speaking of those that onely took Sanctuary at the Name of *Christians*, he adds, that those who lived not according to the Laws

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Part. I. of *Christ*, and were only called by his Name, they begg'd of them that such might be punished. To the same purpose, *Athenagoras*, in his *Embassy*, taking notice how their Enemies laid wait for their Lives and Fortunes, loaded them with heaps of Reproaches, charging them with things that never so much as entred into their Minds, and of which their Accusers themselves were most guilty, he makes this Offer; Let but any of us be convict of any Crime either small or great, and we refuse not to be punished, nay, are ready to undergo the most cruel and heavy penalty: but if we be only accused for our Name, (and to this day all our Accusations are but the figments of obscure and uncertain fame, no Christian having ever been convict of any fault) then we hope it will become such wise, gracious, and mighty Princes as you are, to make such Laws as may secure us from those wrongs and injuries. But alas! so clear was their Innocency, that their bitterest Adversaries durst not suffer them to come to a fair open Tryal. If you be so certain that we are guilty (says *Tertullian* to the Heathens) why then are we not treated in the same nature with all Malefactors,

Leg. pro Christian.

P. 3.

Ap. c. 2. p. 2.

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factors, who have leave both by them- Part I.
selves and their *advocates* to defend their
Innocency, to answer and put in Pleas,
it being unlawful to condemn any be-
fore they be heard, and have liberty to
defend themselves? Whereas Christians
only are not permitted to speak any
thing that might clear their Cause, main-
tain the Truth, and make the Judge able
to pronounce Righteous Sentence. 'Tis
enough to justify the publique *odium*, if
we do but confess our selves *Christians*,
without ever examining of the Crime;
contrary to the manner of procedure a-
gainst all other Delinquents, whom 'tis
not enough barely to charge to be
Murderers, *Sacrilegious*, or *Incestuous*, or
Enemies to the *Publick*, (the *titles* you are
pleased to bestow upon us) unless they
also take the Quality of the Fact, the
Place, Manner, Time, Partners, and Ac-
cessories under examination. But no such
favor is shewn to us, but we are con-
demned without any *Inquisition* passed
upon us. And good reason there was
that they should take this course, seeing
they could really find nothing to con-
demn them for, but for being *Christians*.
This one would think strange, especi-
ally amongst a People so renowned for

Part I. *justice and equity as the Romans were, and yet in these times nothing more ordinary. Therefore when Urbicius the*
Just. Mart. Ap. 1. p. 43. Prefect of Rome had condemned Ptolomeus meerly upon his confessing himself a Christian, one *Lucius* that stood by cried out, *What strange course is this, what infamous misdemeanor is this man guilty of, that when he's no Adulterer, Fornicator, no murderer, no Thief nor Robber, thou shouldst punish him only because he calls himself a Christian? Certainly, Urbicius, such justice as this does not become the Piety of the Emperour, or the Philosophy of Cæsar his Son, or the Sacred and Venerable Senate. And Tertullian tells us, 'twas the common Accusation they had in their mouths, such or such a one is a good man, onely he is a Christian, or I wonder at such a one, a Wise man but lately turned Christian. So Cyprian, I remember, reduces his Adversary to this unavoidable Dilemma; Chuse one of these two things, to be a Christian either is a fault, or 'tis not; if it be a fault, why dost thou not kill every one that confesses it; if it be not, why dost thou persecute them that are innocent; Hence we find nothing more common in the old Apologists, than Complaints concerning the Unreasonableness*

Ap. c. 3. p. 4.

Ad Demet. p. 200.

Vid. Tert.

Ap. c. 1. 2, 3.

Just. Mart.

Ap. 2. p. 54.

68, 69.

Athenag.

leg. pro

Christian.

p. 3, 4.

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ness of being accused, condemned, and Part I.
punished, meerly for their *name*, this
being the first and great Cause of all
that Hatred and Cruelty that was exer-
cised towards them; 'twas the Innocent
Name that was hated in them; all the
Quarrel was about this Title; and when
a Christian was guilty of nothing else,
'twas this made him guilty, as *Tertullian*
complains at every turn. The truth is,
they mightily gloried in this *title*, and
were ambitious to own it in the face of
the greatest danger. Therefore when *At-*
talus the famous *French Martyr* was led *Euseb. Hist.*
Eccl. l. 5. c.
1. p. 162.
about the *Amphitheatre*, that he might
be exposed to the hatred and derision of
the People, he triumphed in this, that
a *Tablet* was carried before him with this
Inscription, THIS IS A T T A L U S
THE CHRISTIAN. And *Sanctus* *Ib. p. 158.*
(another of them) being oft asked by the
President what his Name was, what his
City and Country, and whether he was
a Freeman or a Servant, answered nothing
more to any of them then that he was
a *Christian*, professing this Name to be
Countrey, Kindred, and all things to him.
Nay, so great was the Honour and Va-
lue which they had for this Name, that
Julian the Emperour (whom we com-
monly

Part I. monly call the *Apostate* & endeavoured by all ways to suppress it, that when he could not drive the thing, he might at least banish the Name out of the World; and therefore did not only himself constantly call Christians *Galileans*, but made a *Law* that they should be called only by that Name. But to return; the summe is this, the Christians were so buoy'd up with the Conscience of their Innocency, that they cared not who saw them, were willing and desirous to be scann'd and searched to the bottom, and to lie open to the view of all; and therefore desired no other favour than that that *Apologie* which *Justin Martyr* presented to them, might be set out with the decree of the *Senate*, that so People might come to the true Knowledge of their Case, and they be delivered from false Suspitions, and those Accusations, for which they had been undeservedly exposed to so many punishments.

Naz. In-
vest. in
Julian. I.
p. 81.

Ap. I. p. 51.

Thirdly, they appealed for their Vindication to the Judgment and Consciences of their more Sober and Impartial Enemies, and were accordingly acquitted by them, as Guiltless of any heinous Crimes. *Pliny* the Younger being commanded

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manded by the Emperour *Trajan* to give him an account of the *Christians*, tells him, That after the best Estimate that Ep. l. 10. he could take, and the strictest Inqui- Ep. 97. sition that he could make by Tortures, he found no worse of them than this, that they were wont to meet early for the performance of their Solemn Devotions, and to bind themselves under the most sacred obligations to commit no Vice or Wickedness; and that their Religion was nothing else but an Untoward and Immoderate Superstition. This is the testimony which that great man (who being *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*, was capable) to satisfy himself, and who was no less diligent to search into the matter) gives concerning them. Next after him, *Se-* Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 8, 9. p. 122. *renus Granianus* (the *Proconsul* of *Asia*) writes to the Emperour *Adrian*, *Trajan's* Successor, to represent to him how unjust it was to put Christians to death, when no crime was duly laid to their charge, meerly to gratifie the tumultuous Clamours of the People; to whom the *Emperour* answers, that they should not be unjustly troubled; that if any thing was truly prov'd against them, he should punish them according to the nature of the fault; but if done out of

ma-

Part I. malice or spite, he should then accordingly punish the Accuser as a Calumniator. Next to *Adrian*, *Antoninus Pius* (if he be not mistaken for his Successor *Marcus*) in his Epistle to the *Commons of Asia*, tells them, that they had traduced the *Christians*, and had objected those Crimes to them which they could not prove; that they were more firm and undaunted in their Profession than themselves, and had a greater freedom with and confidence towards God; and that therefore he resolved to ratifie and follow the Determination of his Father. After him comes *M. Antoninus*, who, having obtained that famous and signal Victory against the *Quades* in *Germany*, confesses in his Letter to the Senate, (which Letter though I know 'tis questioned by some Learned Men, as now extant, whether true and genuine, yet that there was such a Letter is evident enough from *Tertullian*, who himself lived within a few years of that time, and appeals to it) that it was clearly gotten by the Prayers of the *Christian Legion* which he had in his Army, and therefore commands that none be molested for being Christians, and that if any accuse a Christian for being such, with-

Inst. Mart.
Ap. 24.
160.

ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ
κίαν ὁ ἄνθρωπος

Ib. p. 101,
102.

Ap. c. 5. p. 6.
Et ad Sca.
c. 4. p. 71.

without a sufficient Crime proved against him, he shall be burnt alive for his Accusation: that a Christian confessing himself to be one shall be safe and secure, and that the Governour of the Province shall not drive him to renounce his Profession; and this he commands to be confirmed by the Decree of the Senate. So clear did the Christians appear to their greatest Enemies, especially in their more calm and sober Intervals. Nay, Trypho the Jew (and that very Notion speaks him Enemy enough, yet) confesses them clear of those foul Aspersions; for when the Martyr had asked him, whether he disliked the Christians Manners and Way of Life, and whether he really believed that they eat Mens Flesh, and putting out the Candles ran together in Promiscuous Mixtures; the Jew answered, that those things whereof they were accused by many were unworthy of Belief, as being so extremely abhorrent to Humane Nature; and that the Precepts which are commanded in their Gospel (which his Curiosity had prompted him to read) were so great and admirable, that he supposed no man could be able to keep and obey them. And, to instance in no more, the Hea-

then

*Just. Mart.
dial. cum
Tryph.
p. 227.*

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Part I. *then Oracle* it self pronounced in favour of the Christians ; for *Apollo* giving forth his Oracles, not as he was wont by Humane Voice, but out of a dark and dismal *Cavern*, confessed it was because of *just men* that lived upon the Earth; and when *Dioclesian* enquired who those just men were, one of the Heathen *Priests* that stood by answered, that they were the *Christians*. This *Constantine the Great* tells us he himself heard, being then a young man, and in company at that time with the Emperour *Dioclesian*, and he there solemnly calls God to Witness for the truth of the story.

*Euseb. de
vit. Const. l.
2. c. 50, 51.
p. 467.*

*Lib. 3. p.
128, 129.*

From all which it appears how Innocent the Christians were of those things which the *Gentiles* charged upon them, how infinitely strict and unblameable in their Lives, and therefore triumphed over the Heathens in the Purity and Innocency of their Conversations. *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that the Churches of God which had taken upon them the Discipline of *Christ*, if compared to the common Societies of men, were amongst them like Lights in the World. For who (says he) is there, but he must needs confess that the worser part of our Church is much better than the Popular
Af-

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Assemblies? as for instance? the *Church* Part 1.
of God at *Athens* is meek and quiet, as
endeavoring to approve it self to the
great God; whereas now the *popular as-*
sembly of *Athens* is seditious and tumult-
uous, and no ways to be compared with
the Church of God in that City. And
the samemay be said of the Churches of
God, and the Vulgar Assemblies which
are at *Corinth* or *Alexandria*. So Mi- Pag. 29.
nutius Felix; Should we Christians be
compared with you, although our Di-
scipline may seem somewhat inferior,
yet we should be found infinitely to
transcend you. You forbid Adultery, and
then *practise* it; we keep entirely to our
own Wives. You punish Wickedness
when *committed*, with us even a Wic-
ked *thought* is sin; you stand in awe of
those who are *conscious* of your Crimes,
we of nothing but our *consciences*, with-
out which we cannot be. And last of all,
'tis with your *party* that the Prison is
filled and crowded, no *Christian* is there,
unless such a one as is either a shame to
his Religion, or an Apostate from it.
And a little after he tells his Adversary, Pag. 31.
how much they exceeded the best Phi-
losophers, who were filthy and tyran-
nical, and only Eloquent to declaim
against

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Part I. against those Vices of which themselves were most guilty : that we Christians do not measure Wisdom by Mens Habits, but by their Minds and Tempers, and do not speak great things, but live them; having this to boast of, that we really attain to those things which they earnestly sought, but could not find. Thus

De justit. l.
5c. 9. p.
485.

Lactantius having excellently discoursed of the Prodigious Debaucheries and Wickednesses of the Heathens ; but which of these things (says he) can be objected to our People, whose whole Religion is to live *without spot or blemish* ? from whence they might easily gather, had they any Understanding, that Piety is on our side, and that they themselves are vile and impious. And *Eusebius* tells us, that in this time the Christian Faith had by Gravity, Sincerity, Modesty, and Holiness of Life, so conquered all Opposition, that none durst bespatter it, or charge it with any of those Calumnies which the Ancient Enemies of our Religion used to fasten upon it. What Religion (says *Arnobius*) can be truer, more useful, powerful, just, than this ? Which (as he elsewhere notes) renders men Meek, Speakers of Truth, Modest, Chaste, Charitable, Kind,

Hist. Ecc. l.
4. c. 7. p.
121. Vide
Constant.
Or. ad cœ-
lum. S. S. c.
23. p. 599.

Adv. gent.
l. 4. p. 67.

Ch. 4. *Primitive Christianity.* 95

Kind, and helpful to all, as if most near-ly related to us. And indeed this is the genuine and natural tendency of the Christian Doctrine, and which it cannot but effect where-ever 'tis kindly embraced and entertained. So true is that which *Athenagoras* told the *Emperours*; that no *Christian* could be a bad man, unless he were an *hypocrite*. And *Tertullian* openly declares, that when men depart from the Discipline of the Gospel, they so far cease amongst us to be accounted *Christians*. And therefore when the *Heathens* objected, that some that went under that Name were guilty of great Enormities, and enquired how comes such a one to be a Cheat, if the Christians be so righteous; how so cruel, if they be merciful? He answers, that by this very thing they bore witness, that they who were real Christians were not such; that there's a vast difference between the *crime* and the *name*, the *opinion* and the *truth*; that they are not presently Christians that are called so, but cheat others by the pretence of a Name; that they shunn'd the company of such, and did not meet or partake with them in the Offices of Religion; that they did not admit *those* whom

meer

Part I.

Leg. pro Christian.

p. 4.

Ap. c. 46. p. 36.

Ad Nation. l. 1. c. 5. p. 42.

Part I. meer Force and Cruelty had driven to deny *Christianity*, much less such as voluntarily transgressed the Christian Discipline: and that therefore the Heathens did very ill to call them *Christians*, whom the Christians themselves did disown, who yet were not wont to deny their own Party.

CHAP. V.

Of the Positive parts of their Religion: and first of their Piety towards God.

The Religion of the Ancient Christians considered, with respect to God, themselves, and other men. Their Piety seen in two things, their Detestation of Idolatry, and Great Care about the matters of Divine Worship. What Notion they had of Idolatry; their Abhorrency of it. Their refusing to give Divine Honour to Angels and Created Spirits: this condemned by the Laodicean Council. Their denying any thing of Divine Honour to Martyrs and departed Saints. The famous Instance of the Church of Smyrna,

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Smyrna concerning S. Polycarp. S. Augustine's testimonies to this purpose. Part I.

Their mighty abhorrence of the Heathen Idolatry. The very making an Idol accounted unlawful. Hatred of Idolatry one of the first principles instilled into new Converts. Their affectionate bewailing any that lapsed into this sin. Several severe penalties imposed by the ancient Council of Illiberis upon persons guilty of Idolatry. They were willing to hazard any thing rather than sacrifice to the Gods. Constantius his plot to try the integrity of his Courtiers. A double instance of the Christian Souldiers in Julian's Army: their active zeal in breaking the Images of the Heathen gods and assaulting persons while doing sacrifice to them; this whether justifiable. Notwithstanding all this, the Christians accused by the Heathens of Idolatry; of worshipping the Sun: whence that charge arose. Of adoring a Cross. Of worshipping an Asses head. Christians called Asinarii. The absurd and monstrous Picture of Christ mentioned by Tertullian. The occasion of this ridiculous fiction whence.

H

Having

Part I.

Tit. 2. 12.

HAVING thus seen with how much clearness the ancient Christians vindicated themselves from those unjust aspersions, which their spiteful and malicious adversaries had cast upon them; we come now to take a more direct and positive view of their Religion, which, according to S. Pauls division, we shall consider as to their *piety* towards God; those *virtues* which more immediatly concern'd *themselves*, and those which respected their behaviour and carriage towards *others*. Their *Piety* towards God appeared in those two main instances of it, a serious and hearty detestation of **Idolatry** and a religious care about the concerns of **Divine Worship**.

De idolo-
lat. c. 1.
p. 85.

Conc. Illi-
berit. Can.
2.

Idolatry in those times was the prevailing sin of the world; *the principal crime of mankind, the great guilt of the Age, and the almost sole cause of mens being brought into judgment*, as what in a manner contains all sins under it, as *Tertullian* begins his Book upon that subject; a crime of the *first rank*, and one of the *highest sorts of wickedness*, as 'tis called by the most ancient Council in *Spain*. They looked upon it as a sin that

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 99

that undermined the very Being of the Deity, and ravished the honour of his Crown. Before we proceed any further, we shall first inquire what was the notion they generally had of Idolatry; and they then accounted that a man was guilty of Idolatry, when he gave *divine adoration* to any thing that was *not God*; not only when he worshipped a *material Idol*, but when he vested *any creature* with that religious respect and veneration that was onely due to God: Idolatry (says *Tertullian*) robs God, denying him those honours that are due to him, and conferring them upon others, so that at the same time it does both *defraud* him and *reproach* him: and a little after he expressly affirms, that whatever is exalted above the Standard of *civil Worship*, in imitation of the divine Excellency, is directly made an Idol: thus *S. Gregory*, for his solid and excellent learning call'd *the Divine*, (a title never given to any besides him, but to *St. John the Apostle*) designs Idolatry (which

Part I.

to be *the translation of that worship that is due to the Creator upon the Creature*. Accordingly we find them infinitely zealous to assert divine adoration as

ut supra
c. 11.

Ib. c. 15. p.
95.

Greg. Naz.
Orat. Pa-
neg. in Na-
tivity. Chri-
sti. Or. 38.
p. 620.

Part I. the proper and incommunicable prerogative of God alone, and absolutely refusing to impart Religious Worship to any though the best of creatures; surely if any one would think *Angels*, the first rank of *created* beings, creatures of such sublime excellencies and perfections, might have challenged it at their hands; but hear what *Origen* says to this; we adore (*says he*) our Lord God, and serve him *alone*, following the example of *Christ*, who when tempted by the Devil to fall down and worship him, answered, *thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*; which is the reason why we refuse to give honours to those spirits that *preside* over humane affairs, because we cannot serve two Masters, to wit, God and *Mammon*; as for these *Demons*, we know that they have no administration of the conveniences of mans life: yea, though we know that they are not *Demons* but *Angels*, that have the Government of fruits and seasons, and the productions of Animals committed to them; we indeed speak *well* of them, and think them *happy* that they are intrusted by God to manage the conveniencies of mans life; but yet do not give them that honour

Contr Cels.
l. 8. p. 415,
416.

honour that is only due to God ; for this neither does God allow of, neither do they desire it ; but equally love and regard us when we do not, as if we did sacrifice to them. And when *Celsus* a little before had smartly pressed him to do honour to *Demons*, he rejects the motion with great contempt, away (*says Pag. 395.* *be*) with this Council of *Celsus*, who in this is not in the least to be hearkened to ; for the great God only is to be adored, and prayers to be delivered up to none but his only begotten Son , *the the first born of every creature*, that as *our High-Priest* he may carry them to *his Father* and to *our Father*, to *his God* and to *our God*. 'Tis true that the Worship of *Angels* did (and that very early, as appears from the *Apostles* caveat against it in his *Epistle* to the *Colossians*) creep into some parts of the Christian Church, but was always disowned and cryed out against,, and at last publickly and solemnly condemned by the whole *Laodicean Council* : *it is not lawful* (*says the thirty fifth Canon of that Council*) for *Christians* to leave the Church of God, and to go and invoke *Angels*, and to make prohibited assemblies : if therefore any one shall be found devoting himself to

Part 1. *this private Idolatry, let him be accursed; forasmuch as he has forsaken the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and has delivered up himself to Idolatry.* From which nothing can be more clear, then that it was the sense of these *Fathers*, that the *worshipping of Angels* was not onely down-right *Idolatry*, but a plain *Apostasie* from the Christian Faith.

Nor were they more peremptory in denying divine honour to *Angels*, than they were to *Martyrs* and *departed Saints*: for though they had a mighty honour and respect for *Martyrs* (as we shall take notice afterwards) as those that had maintained the truth of their Religion and seal'd it with their Blood, and therefore did what they could to do praise and honour to their memories, yet were they far from placing any thing of Religion or divine adoration in it; whereof twill be enough to quote one famous instance. The Church of *Smyr-*

Euseb. hist.
Eccles. l. 4.
c. 15. p. 134.

na, writing to the Churches of *Pontus*, to give them an account of the martyrdom of *Policarpus* their Bishop, tells them, that after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous to have gotten the *remains* of his body, to have given them decent and honourable burial

rial, but were prevented in it by some **Part 1.**

Jews, who importuned the *Proconsul* to the contrary, suggesting that the *Christians* leaving their *crucified* Master, might henceforth worship *Polycarpus*; whereupon they add, that this suggestion must needs proceed from ignorance of the true state of *Christians*; *this they did* (say they) *not considering how impossible 'tis that ever we should either forsake Christ, who died for the salvation of mankind, or that we should worship any other. We adore him as the Son of God; but the Martyrs, as the Disciples and followers of our Lord, we deservedly love for their eminent kindness to their own Prince and Master; whose Companions, and fellow-Disciples we also by all means desire to be.* This instance is so much the more valuable in this case, not only because so plain and pertinent, but because so ancient, and from Persons of so great authority in the Church: for this is not the testimony of any one private Person, but of the *whole Church of Smyrna*, according as it had been trained up under the Doctrine and Discipline of *Polycarpus*, the immediate Disciple of *S. John*. This was the Doctrine and practice of *Christians*

Part I. then and it held so for some Ages after, even down to the times of St. *Augustine*, when yet in many other things the simplicity of the Christian Religion began to decline apace: We set apart (*says he*) no *Temples*, nor *Priests*, nor *divine services* nor *sacrifices* to *Martyrs*; because they are *not God*, but the same who is theirs, is our *God*: indeed we honour their *memories*, as of holy men, who have stood for the truth, even unto death, that so the true Religion might appear, and those which are false be convinc'd to be so; but who ever heard a *Priest* standing at the *Altar*, built for the honour and worship of God over the body of the holy *Martyr*, to say in his *Prayers*, *I offer sacrifice to thee Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian*; for in such commemorations we offer to that God, who made them both men and *Martyrs*, and has made them partners with holy Angels in the heavenly glory; and by these solemnities we both give thanks to the true God for the victories which they have gain'd, and also stir up our selves by begging his assistance; to contend for such crowns and rewards as they are possessed of; so that whatever offices religious men perform in the *places* of the

Aug. de
Civ. Dei.
l. 8. c. 27.
p. 491. vid.
l. 22. c. 10.
col. 1355.

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 105

the *Martyrs*, they are only *ornaments* to Part I. their memories, not *sacrifices* or divine services done to the departed, as if they were Deities. More to the same purpose we may find in that place, as also in infinite other places of his Works, where (were it worth the while) I could easily shew that he does no less frequently than expressly assert, that though the *honour* of *love, respect, and imitation*, yet no *religious adoration* is due either to *Angels, Martyrs, or departed Saints*.

But the great instance wherein the primitive *Christians* manifested their detestation of Idolatry was, in respect of the *idolatrous Worship* of the heathen world, the denying and abhorring any thing of divine honour that was done to their gods. They looked upon the very *making* of Idols (though with no intention to worship them) as an unlawful trade, and was inconsistent with Christianity: *how have we renounced the Devil and all his Angels*, (says Tertullian, meaning their solemn renunciation in baptism) *if we make Idols, nor is it enough to say, though I make them, I do not worship them; there being the same cause not to make them, that there is not to worship them; viz. the offence*
that

de Idol-
lat. c. 6.
p. 83.

Part I. *that in both is done to God: yet thou dost so far worship them, as thou makest them that others may worship them: and therefore he roundly pronounces, that no Art, no Profession, no service whatsoever that is imployed either in making or*
Cap. 11. p. 92. vid. c. 9, 10. *ministring to Idols, can come short of Idolatry. They startled at any thing that had but the least shadow of symbolizing with them in their Idolatry; therefore the Ancyran Council condemned (them) to a two years suspension from the Sacrament, who sat down with their Heathen friends upon their solemn Festivals in their Idol-Temples, although they brought their own Provisions along with them, and touched not one bit of what had been offered to the Idol. Their first care in instructing new Converts, was to leave them with the hatred of Idolatry: Those that are to be initiated into our Religion (says Origen) we do before all things instill into them a great dislike and contempt of all Idols and Images, and lift up their minds from worshipping Creatures instead of God, to him who is the great Creator of the world. If any through weakness chanced at any time to lapse into this sin, how pathetically did they bewail it? So Celerinus in his*
Can. 7.
Adv. Cels. l. 3. p. 120.
Epistle

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 107

Epistle to Lucian, giving him an account Part I.
of a woman, that to avoid persecution,
had done sacrifice, and thereby fallen *Inter Epist.*
from *Christ*, he bewails her as *dead*, tells *Cypr. Ep.*
him that it stuck so close to him, that *20. p. 32.*
though in the time of *Easter*, a time of
festivity and rejoycing, yet he wept night
and day, and kept company with sack-
cloth and ashes, and resolved to do so,
till by the help of *Christ*, and the Prayers
of good men, she should by repentance
be raised up again. The better to pre-
vent this sin (wherein weaker Christi-
ans were sometimes ensnared in those
times of cruelty and persecution) the
discipline of the ancient Church was ve-
ry severe against it; of which we can
have no better evidence, then to take a
little view of the determinations relating
to this case of that ancient Council of *Il-* *Concil. Illi-*
beris, held some years before the time *ber. Can. 2.*
of *Constantine*; there we find, that if *vid. not.*
any Christian after Baptism took upon *Albaspin.*
him the *Flamin-ship* or Priesthood of the *p. 5. de*
Gentiles (an Office ordinarily devolved *rit. Eccles.*
upon the better sort, and which Chri- *Obs. 22.*
stians sometimes either made suit for, to
gain more favour with the People, or
had it forc'd upon them by the Laws of
the Countrey so that they must either
undergo

Part I. undergo it, or fly and forfeit their Estates) such a one, no not at the Hour of death, was to be received into the *Communion* of the Church. The reason of which Severity was, because whoever underwent that Office must do *sacrifice* to the Gods, and entertain the People with several kind of Sights, Plays, and Sports; which could not be managed without Murders, and the Exercise of all Lust and Filthiness, whereby they did *double* and *treble* their sin, as that Council speaks. If a Christian in that Office did but allow the *charges* to maintain those Sports and Sights, (although he did not *actually* sacrifice, which he might avoid, by substituting a *Gentile* Priest in his room) he was indeed to be taken into Communion at last, but was to undergo a very severe *penance* for it all his Life. Nay, although he did neither of the former, yet if he did but wear a *Crown* (a thing usually done by the Heathen Priests) he was to be excluded from Communion for *two years* together. If a Christian went up to the *Capitol* (probably out of Curiosity) only to see the Sacrifices of the Gentiles, and did not see them, yet he should be as guilty as if he had seen them, his Intention and Will being

Vid. Can. 3.
p. 8.

Can. 55. p.
69.

Can. 59. p.
71.

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 109

being the same, as the Learned *Albassine* Part 1.
 (and I think truly) understands the *Ca-* Can. 41 p.
non. And in such a case if the person 57.
 was one of the *faithful*, he was not to
 be received till after *ten years* Repen-
 tance. Every Master of a Family was
 commanded to suffer no little *little Idols* or
Images to be kept in his House, to be
 worshiped by his Children or Servants;
 but if this could not be done without
 danger of being betrayed and accused by
 his Servants (a thing not unusual in those
 Times) that then at least he himself should
 abstain from them ; otherwise to be
 thrown out of the Church. Being im-
 bued with such *principles*, and trained
 up under such a *discipline* as this, 'tis no
 wonder if they would *do* or *suffer* any
 thing rather than comply with the least
 symptom of Idolatry. They willingly
 underwent Banishment and Confiscation,
 amongst several of which sort, *Caldonius* Ep. 18. p. 30.
 tells *Cyprian* of one *Bona*, who being
 violently drawn by her Husband to sa-
 crifice, they by force guided her Hand
 to do it, cried out and protested against
 it, that 'twas not *she* but *they* that did it,
 and was thereupon sent into banishment.
 They freely laid down their greatest Ho-
 nours and Dignities, rather than by any
idola-

Part I. *idolatrous* act to offer violence to their Consciences, whereof *Constantius*, the Father of *Constantine* made this wise experiment, He gave out that all the Officers and great men of the *Court* should either do sacrifice to the gods, or immediately quit his Service, and the Offices and Preferments which they held under him; whereupon many turned about, while others remained firm and unshaken; upon this the Prudent and excellent Prince discovered his Plot, embraced, commended, and advanced to greater honours those who were faithful to their Religion and their Conscience; reproaching and turning off those who were so ready to acquit and forfeit them. Thus *Jovianus*, a man of considerable note and quality, and an Officer of great place in *Julian's* Army, when the Emperour sent out his Edict that all the Souldiers should either sacrifice or lay down their Arms, presently threw away his *belt*, rather than he would obey that impious command; though the Emperour at that time, for reasons of State would not suffer him to depart. And after the death of *Julian*, when by the unanimous vote of the whole Army he was chosen Emperour he utterly refused

*Euseb. de
vir. Con-
stant. l. 1. c.
19. p. 417.*

*Socr. hist.
Eccles. l. 3.
c. 22. p. 195.*

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 111

fused it, till the Army had renounced **Part 1.**
their *Pagan* Idolatry and Superstition.

And though 'tis true that *life* is dearest to men of all things in this world; yet how chearfully did they chuse rather to shed their blood, than to defile their consciences with Idolatry; of which *Eusebius* gives us many instances; and indeed this was the common test in those times, either *sacrifice* or *die*. *Phileas*

Bishop of *Thmuis* in a letter to his People, giving them an account of the Martyrdoms that hapned at *Alex-*

Euseb. hist.

Eccles. l. 8.

c. 10. p. 304.

andria, tells them, that many after having endured strange and unheard of torments, were put to their choice, whether they would sacrifice and be set at liberty, or refuse and lose their heads; whereupon all of them without any hesitation readily went to imbrace death; knowing well how the Scripture is, *that whoever sacrifices unto strange gods shall be cut off*; and again, *thou shalt have no other Gods but me*. And in the next Chapter *Eusebius* tells us of a whole City of Christians in *Phrygia*, which together with all the men, women and children was burnt to ashes for no other reason, but because they universally confessed themselves to be *Christi-*

ans

Part 1. *ans*, and refused to obey those that commanded them to worship Idols: instances of which kind there are enough to be met with in the *Histories* of the Church.

And so fix'd and unmoveable were they in this, that no promises or hopes of reward, no fear nor threatning could either tempt or startle them; a memorable passage or two that we meet withal to this purpose: it was a custom amongst the *Romans* to shew some respect and honour not only to the *Emperours* themselves, but even to their *Statues* and *Images*, by bowing the body, or some other act of external veneration. Now *Julian* the Emperour (whose great design was to reduce all men, but especially his Army back to Paganism and Idolatry) made use of this crafty project; he placed the Pictures of *Jupiter*, and other Heathen Gods, so close to his own *Statues*, that they could not bow to the one but they must also to the other; politickly reducing them to this strait, that either they must refuse to pay civil honour to their Prince (which had been a sufficient crime against them) or seem at least to do *honour* unto the gods; with this device the less wary and cautious

Naz. Orat. invelt. 1. in Julian. Or. 13. p. 90. Vid. Sozom. hist. Eccles. l. 5. c. 17.

Ch. 5. **Primitive Christianity.** 113

telous were entrapped ; but others that Part 1.
were more pious and prudent, chose rather to deny the Prince that Civil Ho- *Naz. ib.*
mage, and fall into the hands of Martyr- *p. 84.*
dom, than that by such an ambiguous Ado-
ration to seem to patronize Idolatry. At
another time he fell upon this stratagem:
Upon a Solemn Day, when the Empe-
rours were wont to bestow *Largesses* up-
on the *Souldiers*, he caused the Army to
be called before him, sitting then in great
pomp and splendour, and a large *donative*
of Gold to be laid on the one side,
and an heap of Frankincense with fire by
it on the other ; Proclamation being
made, that they that would sacrifice the
one, should have the *other*. By this means
many of the Christian Souldiers were
ensnared, performed the Sacrifice, re-
ceived the Donative, and went home
jolly and secure. But being at Dinner
with their Companions, and drinking
to each other (as the Custom was) with
their Eyes lift up, and calling upon
Christ, and making the *Sign of the Cross*
as oft as they took the Cup into their
hands ; one at the Table told them, he
wondered how they could call upon
Christ whom they had so lately ab-
jured. Amazed at this, and asking how
they

Part I. they had abjured him, they were told, that they had *sacrificed*, which was all one as to *deny Christ*. Whereupon starting up from the Table, they ran up and down the Market-place in a furious and frantick manner, crying out, *We are Christians, we are Christians in heart and truth*, and let all the World take notice that there is but *one God*, to whom we *live*, and for whom we'll *die*. We have not broken the Faith which we swore to thee, *O blessed Saviour*, nor renounced our Profession. If our *hands* be guilty, our *hearts* are innocent. 'Tis not the *Gold* that has corrupted us, but the Emperours *craftiness* hath deceived us. And with that, running to the Emperour, they threw down their *Gold* before him, with this Address, *We have not, Sir, received a Donative, but are condemned to die. Instead of being honoured we are vilified and disgraced. Take this Largeſs, and give it to your Souldiers: as for us, kill us, and sacrifice us to Christ, whom alone we own as our highest Prince. Return us fire for fire, and for the ashes of the Sacrifice reduce us to ashes. Cut off those Hands, which we so wickedly stretched out; those Feet that carried us to so great a Mischief. Give others the Gold*

h. 5. Primitive Christianity. 115

Gold, who may have no cause to repent Part I.
on't ; for our part, Christ is enough for
us, whom we value instead of all things.
With this noble and Generous Resolu-
tion, though the Emperour was highly
enraged, yet because he envied them
the honour of *Martyrdom*, he would not
put them to death, but banished them,
and inflicted other Penalties which might
sufficiently evidence his rage against
them.

Nay, with so warm a Zeal were they
acted against Idolatry, that many of
them could not contain themselves from
falling foul upon it, where-ever they
met it, though with the immediate Ha-
zard of their Lives. So *Romanus* (Dea-
con and Exorcist of the Church of *Cæsa-*
ria) seeing great Multitudes of People at
Antioch flocking to the Temples, and
doing Sacrifice to the Gods, came to
them, and began very severely to re-
prove and reproach them ; for which
being apprehended, after many strange
and cruel Usages he was put to death
with all imaginable Pain and Torture.
Thus *Apphianys* (a Young man) when
the Cryers by Proclamation summoned
all the Inhabitants of *Cæsarea* to sacrifice
to the Gods, the *Tribunes* particularly

*Euseb. de
mart. Pal.
c. 2. p. 320.*

Part I. reciting every mans Name out of a Book, to the great terrour of all that were Christians privately and unknown to us (says *Eusebius*, who lived at that time in the same house with him) stole out, and getting near *Urbanus* the *President*, (who was then compassed about with a *Guard* of Souldiers) just as he was about to offer Sacrifice, caught hold of his Right hand, which he grasped so fast, that he forced him to let fall the Sacrifice, gravely admonishing him to desist from such Errors and Vanities: *Clearly shewing* (says the *Historian*) *that true Christians are so far from being drawn from the Worship of the True God, that by Threatnings and Torments they are rather heightened into a greater and more ingenuous freedom and boldness in the profession of the Truth.* For this Fact the Young man was almost torn in pieces by the Souldiers, whose Rage and Fierceness could scarce suffer him to be repriev'd for Acuter Tortures, which were exercised towards him with all possible Cruelty ; and when all could do no good upon him, he was thrown half dead into the Sea. The like we read of three Famous Christians at *Merum*, a City in *Phrygia*, where, when the Governor

*Socrat.
Hist. Eccl.
l. 3. c. 15.
p. 186.*

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vernour of the *Province* under *Julian* the Part 1.
Apostate, had commanded the Heathen

Temple to be opened, they got by night into the Temple, and broke to pieces all the *Statues* and *Images* of the Gods.

Whereupon, when a General Persecution was like to arise against all the Christians of the City, that the *ignorant* and *innocent* might not suffer, the Authors of the Fact came of their own accord to the Judge, and confessed it; who offered them pardon if they would sacrifice, which they rejected with disdain, and told him they were much readier to endure any Torments, and Death it self, than to be defiled with sacrificing. And accordingly were first treated with all sorts of Torments, and then burnt upon an *Iron Grate*; retaining their Courage to the last; and took their leave of the Governour with this *Sarcasm*, *If thou hast a mind Amachius to eat Roast meat, turn us on the other side, lest we be but half roasted, and so prove ungrateful to thy taste.* So mightily did a Restless Passion for the Divine Honour possess the Minds of those Primitive Christians, and though 'tis true, such Transports of Zeal are not ordinarily warrantable (for which reason the Council of *Illiberis* justly prohibited

Part I. hibited those who were killed in the defacing and demolishing Idols, to be reckoned in the number of *Martyrs*) yet do they sufficiently shew what a Spirit of Eagerness and Activity ruled in those Times against the False Religions of the World.

*Apl. c. 16.
p. 16.*

*Min. Fal.
p. 24.*

By all this we may see how unjustly the Christians were traduced and accused for *Idolaters*. Three things were commonly charged upon them; that they worshipped the *Sun*, the *Cross*, and an *Asses head*. For the first, their worshipping the *Sun*, *Tertullian* answers, that the mistake arose from a double Cause, partly that the Christians of those Times did generally pray toward the *East* and the *Sun-rising*, which the Heathens themselves also did, though upon different grounds: and partly because they performed the Solemnities of their Religion upon the *day* that was dedicated to the *Sun*, which made the Gentiles suspect that they worshipped the *Sun* it self. They were next charged with worshipping *Crosses*; a Charge directly false. As for crosses (says *Ostavius*) we neither *desire* nor *worship* them; 'tis you who consecrate Wooden Gods, that perhaps adore Wooden Crosses as parts of them: for what else are
your

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your *Ensigns, Banners and Colours*, with Part I. which you go out to War, but *Golden and Painted Crosses*? The very *Trophies* of your Victory do not onely resemble the fashion of a simple Cross, but of a man that's fastned to it. The very same Answer which *Tertullian* also returns to this Charge. The occasion of it no doubt was the Christians talking of, and magnifying so much their *crucified Master*, and their almost constant Use of the *Sign of the Cross*, which (as we shall see afterwards) they made use of even in the most common actions of their Lives. But for paying any Adoration to a *material Cross*, was a thing to which those Times were the greatest strangers. Otherwise, understanding the Cross for him that hung upon it, they were not ashamed (with the great Apostle) to glory in the *Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*, and to count it the matter of their highest joy and triumph; but the absurdest part of the Charge was, that they worshipped the *Head of an Ass*. I hear (says the Heathen in *Minutius Felix*) that being seduced by I know not what fond persuasion, they worship the *consecrated Head of an Ass*, one of the filthiest Creatures. A Religion fitly calculated for

Loc. *supra*
citat.

Pag. 2.

Part I.

*Ibid.**Vid. ad**Nation. l. 1.**c. 14. p. 50.*Onony-
chites.]*De vartis
huius vocis
lectionibus,
vid. Rigalt.
in loc. &
Voss. de
Idol. l. 3.
c. 75. p. 565.
Pag. 23.*

persons of such a *dull* and *stupid* disposition. Hence *Tertullian* tells us, that Christians were called *Afinarii*, Ass-worshippers (and that *Christ* was painted and publicly exposed by the bold wicked Hand of an Apostate Jew with *Asses ears*, one of his feet *hoof'd*, holding a *Book* in his Hand, and having a *Gown* over him, with this Inscription;

DEUS CHRISTIANORUM
ONONYCHITES,

The Ass-hoof'd God of the Christians.

A most ridiculous representation, and the Issue of the most foolish spite and malice. *When I saw it* (says he) *I laugh'd both at the Title and the Fashion.* This *Octavius* tells his Adversary was the result and spawn of Lying Fame, begot and nourished by the Father of Lies: for who (says he) can be so silly as to worship this? or who can be so much more silly as to believe it should be worshipp'd? unless it be that you yourselves do consecrate whole Asses in the Stable with your Goddess *Epona*, and religiously adorn them in the Solemnities of *Isis*, and both sacrifice and adore the Heads of Rams and Oxen, and make Gods of a mixture of a Goat and a Man, and dedicate them with the Faces of

Dogs

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Dogs and *Lions*. More he has there to Part I. the same purpose, as *Tertullian* also had answered the same thing before him. The true ground of this Ridiculous Charge (as *Tertullian* observes) was a *Vid. etiam ad Nation. l. 1. c. 11. p. 49.* Fabulous Report that had been a long time common amongst the Heathens, that the *Jews*, when wandering in the Wilderness, and almost ready to die of Thirst, were conducted by Wild Asses to a Fountain of Water; for which great Kindness, they formed the shape of an Ass, and ever after worshipped it with Divine Honours. This is confidently reported both by *Tacitus* and *Plutarch*, as *Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 4. Plut. Sym. pos. l. 4. quest. 5. p. 670.* it had been many years before by *Apio* the *Alexandrian* in his Books against the *Jews*. And by this means the Heathens, who did frequently confound the *Jews* and *Christians*, came to form and fasten this Charge upon them, when it was equally false in respect of both. For as *Tertullian* observes, the same *Tacitus*, who *Apul. c. 16.* reports this, tells us in another place, that when *Pompey*, at the taking of *Jerusalem*, presumptuously broke into the *Holy of Holies*, whither none but the *High Priest* might enter, out of a Curiosity to pry into the most Hidden Secrets and *Arcana* of their Religion, he found no
Image

Part I. Image at all there; whereas (says *Tertullian*) had they worshipped any such thing, there had been no likelier place to have met with it, and therefore brands him with the Charge of *the most lying Historian in the World*. And thus we see how the Ancient Christians manifested and maintained their Love and Piety towards God by a most Vigorous and hearty Opposition of that Idolatry, that reigned so uncontrollably in the Heathen World.

CHAP. VI.

Of Churches and Places of Publick Worship in the Primitive Times.

Place, a circumstance necessary to every Action. The Piety of Christians in Founding Places for the Solemnities of Religion. They had distinct and separate Places for their Publick Assemblies, even in the Apostles times. This prov'd out of the New Testament, as also in the succeeding Ages, from the Testimonies of the Fathers and Heathen Writers. The common Objection

jection of the Gentiles. That Christians had no Temples, considered and answered. Churches increased as Christianity met with favourable Entertainment : restored and repaired by Dioclesian, Maximinus, Constantine. The fashion of their Churches Oblong : built towards the East. The Form of their Churches described. The Vestibulum or Porch. The Narthex, and what in it. The Nave or Body of the Church. The Ambo or Reading Pew the station of the Faithful. The *ισαλειον*, or Chancel. The Altarium or Lords Table. The Bishops Throne and Seats of the Presbyters. The Diaconian what. The Prothesis. Christians then beautified their Churches. Whether they had Altars in them. Decent Tables for the Celebration of the Divine Offices. Those frequently by the Fathers styled Altars, and in what sense. They had no such gaudy Altars as the Heathens had in their Temples, and the Papists now in their Churches. Altars when begun to be fixed and made of Stone. Made Asylums and Places of Refuge, and invested with many Priviledges by Christian Emperours. No Images in their Churches for above four hundred years, prov'd out of the Fathers. Pictures in
Chur-

Primitive Christianity. Ch.6.

Churches condemned by the Council of Illiberis. An Account of Epiphanius his tearing the picture of Christ in the Church of Anablatha ; and the great force of the Argument thence against Image worship. Christian Churches when first formerly consecrated. The Encoenia of the Ancient Church. Our Wakes or Feasts in memory of the Dedication of particular Churches. What Incomes or Revenues they had in the first Ages. Particular Churches had some standing Revenues, even under the Heathen Emperours. These much increased by the Piety of Constantine and the first Christian Princes ; their Laws noted to that purpose. Their Reverence shewed at their going into Churches, and during their stay there, even by the Emperours themselves.

THE Primitive Christians were not more heartily Zealous against the Idolatrous Worship of the Heathen Gods, than they were Religiously Observant of whatever concerned the Honour and Worship of the True, as to all the material Parts and Circumstances of it ; as will easily appear, if we consider what Care they had about the place, time, per-

persons, and both the *matter* and the *manner* Part I.
of that Worship that they performed to God. Under each of which we shall take notice of what is most considerable, and does most properly relate to it, so far as the Records of those Times give us an account of it.

Place is an unseparable Circumstance of Religious Worship; for every Body by the natural necessity of its being requires some determinate place either for rest or motion: now the Worship of God being in a great part an External Action, especially when performed by the joynt concurrence of several persons, does not only necessarily require a *place* but a place *conveniently capacious* of all that joyn together in the same Publick Actions of Religion. This reason put all Nations even by the light of Nature upon Erecting *publick places* for the Honour of their Gods, and for their own Conveniency in meeting together to pay their Religious Services and Devotions. But my present Inquiry reaches no further than the *Primitive Christians*; not whether they met together for the discharge of their common Duties; (which I suppose none can doubt of) but whether they had *Churches* fixed and appropriate

Part I. ate Places for the joynt performance of their Publick Offices. And that they had even in those Early Times, will I think be beyond all Dispute, if we take but a short Survey of those first Ages of Christianity. In the Sacred Story we find some more than probable Footsteps of some Determinate Places for their Solemn Conventions, and peculiar only to that use. Of this nature was that *ὑψῶν*, or *Upper Room* into which the *Apostles* and *Disciples* (after the return from the Ascension of our Saviour) went up, as into a place commonly known and separate to that use, there by Fasting and Prayer to make choice of a new *Apostle*; and this supposed by a very ancient Tradition to have been the *same room* wherein our Saviour the night before his Death celebrated the *Passover* with his *Disciples*, and instituted the *Lords Supper*. Such a one, if not, (which I rather think) the same, was that *one place*, wherein they were all assembled with one accord upon the day of *Pentecost*, when the Holy Ghost visibly came down upon them. And this the rather, because the Multitude (and they too *strangers of every Nation under Heaven*) came so readily to the place upon the first rumour

Act. 1. 13.

Act. 2. 1.

of

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of so strange an Accident which could Part 1.

hardly have been, had it not been commonly known to be the Place where the Christians used to meet together. And this very Learned Men take to be the meaning of that, *Act. 2. 46.* *They continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread, καὶ οἰκοῦν, not as we render it, from house to house, but at home, as 'tis in the margin, or in the house, they eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart : i. e.* when they had performed their daily Devotions at the Temple, at the accustomed Hours of Prayer they used to return home to this Upper Room, there to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, and then go to their ordinary Meals. This seems to be a clear and unforc'd Interpretation and to me the more probable, because it immediately follows upon their assembling together in that one place at the day of *Pentecost*, which Room is also called by the same name of *House*, at the *second Verse* of that Chapter. And 'tis no ways unlikely (as Mr. Mede conjectures) but that when the first Believers sold their Houses and Lands, and laid the mony at the Apostles feet to supply the necessities of the Church, some of them might give their Houses (at least some

Part I. some Eminent Room in them) for the Church to meet, and perform their Sacred Duties. Which also may be the reason why the Apostle writing to the particular Christians, speaks so often of the *Church that was in their house*: which seems clearly to intimate not so much the particular persons of any private Family, living together under the same band of Christian Discipline, as that in such or such a House, (and more especially in this or that Room of it) there was the constant and solemn Convention of the Christians of that place, for their joynt Celebration of Divine Worship. And this will be further cleared by that Famous Passage of S. Paul, where, taxing the *Corinthians* for their Irreverence and Abuse of the *Lords Supper*, one greedily eating before another, and some of them to great Excess; *What (says he) have you not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God?* Where that by *Church* is not meant the *Assembly* meeting, but the *Place* in which they used to assemble, is evident, partly from what went before, for *their coming together in the Church*, verse 18. is expounded by *their coming together into one place*, verse 20. plainly arguing that the Apostle meant not the per-

1 Cor.

II. 22.

persons but the place; partly from the Part I.
 Opposition which he makes between the
 Church and their own private Houses;
 if they must have such Irregular Ban-
 quets, they had Houses of their own,
 where 'twas much fitter to do it, and to
 have their ordinary Repast, than in that
 place which was set apart for the Com-
 mon Exercises of Religion, and there-
 fore ought not to be dishonoured by
 such Extravagant and intemperate Feast-
 ings; for which cause he enjoyns them in
 the *close* of that Chapter, *that if any man*
hunger he should eat at home. And that
 this place was always thus understood by
 the Fathers of old, were no hard matter
 to make out; as also by most Learned
 men of later times, of which it shall suffice
 to intimate two of our own, Men of great
 Name and Learning, who have done it to
 great satisfaction.

Thus stood the case during the Apo-
 stles Times; for the Ages after them we
 find that the Christians had their fixed
 and definite places of Worship, especi-
 ally in the second Century; as had we no
 other Evidence, might be made good
 from the Testimony of the Author of
 that *Dialogue in Lucian*, (if not *Lucian*
 himself, of which I see no great cause

Nic. Full.
Miscell. S.
l. 2. c. 9.
Mr. Mede
p. 405.

Philopat.
tom. 2. p.
1007.

Part I.

Pag. 52.

Ap. 2. p. 98.

De Idolol.
c. 7. p. 88.
Adv. Valentin. c. 3.
p. 2. 51.

De Corona
Mil. c. 3. p.
101.

to doubt *I* who lived under the Reign of *Trajan*, and who expressly mentions that *House* or *Room* wherein the Christians were wont to assemble together. And *Clemens* (in his Famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*) assures us, that *Christ* did not onely appoint the times *when*, the Persons by *whom*, but the Places *where* he would be solemnly served and worshipped. And *Justin Martyr* expressly affirms, that upon *Sunday* all Christians (whether in Town or Country) used to assemble together in *one place*, which could hardly be done, had not that place been fixed and settled. The same we find afterwards in several places of *Tertullian*, who speaks of their coming into the Church and the House of God, which he elsewhere calls the *House of our Dove*; *i. e.* our Innocent and Dove-like Religion; and there describes the very Form and Fashion of it. And in another place, speaking of their going into the Water to be baptised, he tells us, they were wont first to go into the Church to make their solemn renunciation before the Bishop. About this time, in the Reign of *Alexander Severus* the Emperour (who began his Reign about the Year 222) the Heathen Historian tells us, that
when

when there was a Contest between the **Part 1.**
Christians and the *Vintners* about a cer- Lamprid.
in vit. A-
lex. Sever.
c. 49. p. 575.
tain Publick place, which the Christians
had seiz'd and challenged for theirs, the
Emperour gave the Cause for the Chri-
stians against the Vintners, saying, *'Twas*
much better that God should be worship-
ped there any ways, than that the Vint-
ners should possess it. If it shall be said,
that the Heathens of those Times ge-
nerally accused the Christians for having
no Temples, and charged it upon them
as a piece of *Atheism and Impiety*; and
that the Christian *Apologists* did not de-
ny it, as will appear to any that will
take the pains to examin the places al-
luded in the Margin. To this the An-
swer in short depends upon the *notion*
which they had of a *Temple*, by which
the Gentiles understood the places de- Min. Fal.
p. 8. --- 26.
Arnob.
adv. gent. l.
6. p. 83.
Lact. de
Orig. error.
l. 2. c. 2. p.
141.
voted to their Gods, and wherein their
Deities were inclosed and shut up, pla-
ces adorned with Statues and Images,
with fine Altars and Ornaments. And
for such Temples as these, they freely
confessed they had none, no nor ought
to have, for that the True God did not
(as the Heathens supposed theirs) *dwell*
in Temples made with hands, nor either
needed nor could possibly be honoured

K 2 by

Part I. by them: and therefore they purposely abstained from the word *Temple*, and I do not remember that 'tis used by any Christian Writer for the Place of the Christian Assemblies for the best part or the first three hundred years. And yet those very Writers who deny Christians to have had any Temples, do at the same time acknowledge that they had their Meeting places for Divine Worship, their *conventicula*, as *Arnobius* calls them, and complains they were furiously demolished by their Enemies. If any desire to know more concerning this, as also that Christians had appropriate places of Worship for the greatest part of the three first Centuries, let him read a discourse purposely written upon this Subject by a *most learned man* of our own Nation: nor indeed should I have said so much as I have about it, but that I had noted most of these things, before I read his Discourse upon that subject.

Mr. Jos.
Mede discourse concerning
Churches
of yr. part.
1.1.2.

Hist. Eccl.
1.8.c.1.p.
292.

Afterwards their Churches began to rise apace, according as they met with more quiet and favourable times; especially under *Vallerian*, *Gallienus*, *Claudius*, *Aurelian*, and some other Emperours: of which Times *Eusebius* tells us, that the

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the *Bishops* met with the highest respect Part I. and kindness both from People and Governours. And adds; But who shall be able to reckon up the innumerable multitudes that daily flocked to the Faith of *Christ*, the number of Congregations in every *City*, those Famous Meetings of theirs in their *Oratories* or Sacred places, so great, that not being content with those old Buildings which they had before, they erected from the very Foundations more fair and spacious Churches in every *City*. This was several years before the times of *Constantine*, and yet even they had their Churches of *ancient date*. This indeed was a very serene and Sun-shiny season, but alas it begun to darken again, and *the clouds returned after rain*; for in the very next Chapter he tells us, that in the Reign of *Dioclesian* there came out Imperial Edicts, commanding all Christians to be persecuted, the Bishops to be Imprisoned, the Holy Bible to be burnt, and their Churches to be demolished and laid level with the ground; which how many they were may be guessed at by this, that (as *Optatus* tells us) there were about this time above forty *Basilicae* or Churches in *Rome*, onely. Upon *Constantines* coming

*De schism.
Donat. l. 2.
p. 40.*

Part I. into a Partnership of the Empire, the Clouds began to disperse and scatter; and *Maximinus* (who then govern'd the Eastern Parts of the Empire) a bitter Enemy to Christians, was yet forced by a Publick Edict to give Christians the free liberty of their Religion, and leave to repair and rebuild τὰ κατεσθραγμένα τὰ οἰκεία, their Churches; which shortly after they every where set upon, raising their Churches from the ground to a vast height, and to a far greater splendor and glory than those which they had before, the Emperours giving all possible Encouragement to it by frequent Laws and Constitutions: the Christians also themselves contributing towards it with the greatest Cheerfulness and Liberality, even to a Magnificence comparable to that of the Jewish Princes towards the Building of *Solomons Temple*, as *Eusebius* tells them, in his *Oration* at the Dedication of the famous Church at *Tyre*. And no sooner was the whole Empire devolved upon *Constantine*, but he published two Laws, one to prohibit *Pagan Worship*, the other commanding Churches to be built of a nobler size and capacity than before; to which purpose he directed his Letters to *Eusebius* and the

Euseb. l. 9. c. 10. p. 364.

Id. lib. 10. c. 2 p. 370.

Ib. c. 4 p. 377.

*De vita
Const. ant. l. 2. c. 43, 46.
p. 464.*

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the rest of the Bishops to see it done Part I.

within their several Jurisdictions, charging also the Governours of the Provinces to be assisting to them, and to furnish them with whatever was necessary and convenient. Infomuch that in a short time the World was beautified with Churches and Sacred Oratories, both in Cities and Villages, and in the most barbarous and desert places, called *κνριαρχα*, says the *Historian*, (from whence our *Kirk* and *Church*) the *Lords Houses*, because erected not to Men, but to the Honour of our *Lord* and *Saviour*. Twere needless to insist any longer upon the Piety of Christians in Building Churches in and after the time of *Constantine*, the Instances being so vastly numerous; only I cannot omit what *Nazianzen* reports of his own Father, who (though Bishop of a very small and inconsiderable Diocese, yet) built a Famous Church almost wholly at his own Charge.

Orat. de laud. Const.
c. 7. p. 660.

Or. funeb. in laud. Patr. Or.
19. p. 313.

Thus we have seen that from the very Infancy of the Gospel the Christians always had their settled and determinate place of Divine Worship; for the Form and Fashion of their Churches, it was for the most part *oblong*, to keep (says some) the better Correspondence

Constit. A. post. l. 2. c.

Part I. with the Fashion of a *Ship*, the common Notion and Metaphor by which the Church was wont to be represented, and to put us in mind that we are tossed up and down in the World as upon a stormy and tempestuous *Sea*, and that out of the Church there's no safe Passage to Heaven, the Country we all hope to arrive at. They were generally built *towards the East*, (towards which also they performed the more solemn parts of their Worship the Reasons whereof we shall see afterwards in its due place) following herein the Custom of the Gentiles, though upon far other grounds than they did; and this seems to have obtained from the first Ages of Christianity; sure I am 'twas so in *Tertullian's* time, who opposing the plain and simple way of the *Orthodox* Assemblies to the *skulking and clancular* Conventicles of the Hereticks, who *Serpent-like* crept about in holes and corners, says he, *The House of our Dove-like Religion is simple, built on high and in open view, and respects the Light as the Figure of the Holy Spirit, and the East as the representation of Christ.* It cannot be thought that in the first Ages, while the Flames of Persecution raged about their Ears, the Christian

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stian Churches should be very stately Part I.
and magnificent, but such as the condition of those Times would bear, their Splendor increasing according to the Entertainment that Christianity met withall in the World, till the Empire becoming Christians, their Temples rose up into *grandeur* and *galantry*, as amongst others may appear by the particular Description which *Eusebius* makes of the Church of Tyre, mentioned before, and that which *Constantine* built at *Constantinople* in Honour of the Apostles, both which were incomparably Sumptuous, and Magnificent.

*De vita
Const. l. 4. c.
58, 59 p.
555.*

I shall not undertake to describe at large the exact Form, and the several Parts and Dimensions of their Churches; (which varied somewhat according to different Times and Ages) but briefly reflect upon such as were most common and remarkable. At the Entrance of their Churches (especially after they began to arrive at more perfection) was the *Vestibulum* (called also *Atrium* and *πρεβδον*) the *Porch* in greater Churches of somewhat larger capacity, adorned many times with goodly Cloisters, Marble Columns, Fountains, and Cisterns of Water, and covered over for the Conveniency of those

Part I.

those that stood or walked there. Here stood the lowest order of *Penitents*, begging the Prayers of the faithful as they went in. For the Church it self, it usually consisted of three parts; the first was the *Narthex* (which we have no proper word to render by) it was that part of the Church that lay next to the great door by which they entred in: in the first part of it stood the *Catechumens*, or first learners of Christianity; in the middle the *Euergumeni*, or those who were possessed by *Satan*; and in this part also stood the *Font*, or place of *Baptismal* Initiation; and towards the upper end was the place of the Hearers, who were one of the Ranks of *Penitents*. The second part contained the middle or main Body of the Church, (called by the *Greeks* *Ναός*, by the *Latins* *Navis*, from whence our term the *nave* of the Church comes) where the *Faithful* assembled for the celebration of Divine Service, where the Men and the Women had their distinct *apartments*, lest at such times unchaste and irregular Appetites should be kindled by a promiscuous interfering with one another: of which pious and excellent contrivance, mention is made in an ancient *Funeral Inscription* found in the *Vatican*

Const. Apost. l. 2. c. 57. p. 875.

Roma subterranean. l. 2. c. 10. num. 23. p. 204.

Cæ.

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Cemetery at Rome; such a one buried Part I.

SINISTRA PARTE VIROREM, on that side of the Church where the men sat. In this Part of the Church, next to the entering into it, stood the Class of the Penitents, who were called *κατακλιτῆρες*, because at their going out they fell down upon their knees before the Bishop, who laid his hands upon them. Next to them was the *Ambo*, the Pulpit, or rather reading Desk, whence the Scriptures were read and preached to the People. Above that were the Faithful, the highest Rank and Order of the People, and who alone communicated at the Lords Table. The third part was the *ἄμβων* or *ἱερὰ τῶν*, separate from the rest of the Church by neat Rails, called *Cancelli*, whence our English word *Chancel*, to denote the part of the Church to this day: into this part none might come but such as were in holy Orders, unless it were the Greek Emperours at Constantinople, who were allowed to come up to the Table to make their Offerings, and so back again; within this Division the most considerable thing was the *Θυσιαστήριον*, the Altar (as they Metaphorically called it, because there they offered the Commemorative Sacrifice of Christs Body and Bloud)

or

Part I. or the *Communion Table* (ἡ Ἀγία τραπέζα) as 'tis frequently styled by the *Greek Fathers*) behind which, at the (very) upper end of the Chancel, was the *Chair* or *Throne* of the Bishop, (for so was it almost constantly called) on both sides wherof were the (σύνθρονοι, the *Seats* of the *Presbyters*, (for the *Deacons* might not here sit down.) the Bishops Throne was raised up somewhat higher from the ground, and from hence I suppose it was that he usually delivered his Sermons to the People. Therefore *Socrates* seems to note it as a new thing in *Chrysostom*, that when he preached he went to sit ἐν τῷ ἀμβωνῷ, upon the *Pulpit*, (he means that in the Body of the Church, for so *Sozomon* tells us that he sat in the *Reading Desk* in the middle of the Church) that by reason of his low voice he might be better heard of the People. Adjoyning to the Chancel, on the *North side* probably, was the *Diaconicon*, mentioned both in the *Laodician Council*, (though I know both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon*, and after them the Learned *Leo Allatius*, will have another thing to be meant in that place) as also in a Law of *Arcadius* and *Honorius* against *Hereticks* and probably so called either be-

Hist. Ecccl. l.
6. c. 5. p.
304.

Lib. 8. c. 5.
p. 764.

Can. 21.
De Templ.
Græc. num.
14. p. 25.
Ĉ. Th. l. 16.
tit. 5. l. 29.
ubi vid.
Jac. Gothofr. Com.

because peculiarly committed to the **Part I.**
Deacon of the place or (as the *Greta*
Commentator upon that Law will have
 it) because set apart ἡ ἱερὴ διακονία, to
 some Sacred Services. It was in the na-
 ture of our modern *Vestries*, the *Sacristy*,
 wherein the Plate, Vessels, and Vest-
 ments belonging to the Church, and o-
 ther things dedicated to Holy Uses, were
 laid up, and where (in after times) *Re-*
liques and such like Fopperies were trea-
 sured up with great Care and Diligence.
 On the other side of the Chancel was
 the *Prothesis* or place where things were
 prepared in order to the Sacrament,
 where the Offerings were laid, and what
 remained of the Sacramental Elements,
 till they were decently disposed of. (And
 this may serve for a short View of the
 Churches of those first Times, after they
 began to grow up into some beauty and
 Perfection.

But though the Christians of those
 Times spared no convenient *cost* in
 Founding and Adorning Publick Places
 for the Worship of God yet were they
 careful to keep a decent Mean between
 a sordid *slovenliness*, and a too curious
 and over nice *superstition*. In the more
 Early Times, even while the Fury and
 Fierce-

Part I. Fierceness of their Enemies kept them low and mean, yet they beautified their Oratories and places of Worship; especially if we may believe the *Author* of the Dialogue in *Lucian* (whom we mentioned before, and who lived within the first Age) who bringing in one *Critias*, that was persuaded by the Christians to go to the place of their Assembly, (which by his Description seems to have been an *ὑψῶν*, or *Upper Room*) tells us, that after they had gone up several Stairs, they came at last into an *House or Room that was overlaid with Gold*, where he beheld nothing but a company of Persons with their Bodies bow'd down and Pale Faces. I know the design of that Dialogue in part is to abuse and deride the Christians, but there's no reason to suppose he feigned those Circumstances which made nothing to his purpose. As the Times grew better they added more and greater Ornaments to them; concerning two whereof there has been some Contest in the Christian World, *Altars* and *Images*. As for *Altars*, the first Christians had no other in their Churches than *decent Tables* of Wood, upon which they celebrated the Holy *Eucharist*; these 'tis true in allusion

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Ch.6. Primitive Christianity. 143

to those in the Jewish Temple, the Fathers generally called *Altars*; and truly enough might do so, by reason of those *Sacrifices* they offered upon them, viz. the commemoration of *Christs Sacrifice* in the Blessed Sacrament, the Sacrifice of *Prayer and Thanksgiving*, and the Oblation of *Alms and Charity* for the Poor, (usually laid upon those Tables) which the Apostle expressly styles *A Sacrifice*. These were the only *Sacrifices* (for no other had the Christian World for many hundreds of Years) which they then offered upon their *Altars*, which were much of the same kind with our *Communion Tables* at this day. For that they had not any such *fixed and gaudy Altars* (as the *Heathens* then had in their *Temples*, and *Papists* still have in their *Churches*) is most evident, because the Heathens at every turn did charge and reproach them for having none, and the Fathers in their Answers did freely and openly acknowledge and avow it; asserting and pleading, that the only true *sacred Altar* was a pure and a *holy Mind*, and that the *best* and most *acceptable Sacrifice* to God was a *pious heart*, and an *innocent and Religious life*. (*Hæc nostra sacrificia, hæc Dei sacra sunt*: These (say they)

Part I.

Vide Clem.
Alex. Strom.
mat. l. 7. p.
117.
Orig. adv.
Cels. l. 4. p.
l. 8. p. 383.
Min. Fal.
p. 8. — 26.
Arnob.
adv. gent.
l. 6. p. 83.
Lact. l. 2. c.

Part i.

they) are our Oblations, these the sacrifices we owe to God. This was the state of Altars in the Christian Churches for near upon the first three hundred years; till *Constantine* coming in, and with him Peace and Plenty, the Churches began to excel in Costliness and Bravery every day, and then the Wooden and Moveable Altars began to be turned into fixed Altars of *Stone* or *Marble*, though used to no other purpose then before, and yet this too did not so universally obtain (though severely urged by *Sylvester* Bishop of *Rome*) but that in very many places Tables or Moveable Altars of Wood continued in use a long time after, (as might easily been made appear from several Passages in *Athanasius* and others, yea even to *S. Augustine's* time, and probably much later, were it proper to my business to search after it. No sooner were Altars made fixed and immovable, but they were compassed in with *Rails* to fence off Rudeness and Irreverence, and persons began to regard them with mighty Observance and Respect; which soon grew so high that they became *Asylums* and Refuges to protect Innocent Persons and Unwitting Offenders from immediate violence and oppression;

Athanasius ad Orthodoxos.
p. 728. to. 1.
Ep. ad solit. vit. agent.
Aug. quest. E. & N. T. quest. 101.
Ep. alipii sape.

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Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity: 145

an Instance whereof *Nazianzen* gives Part I. us in a Christian Widow, a Woman of great Place and Quality, who flying from the Importunities of the President, who would have forced her to marry him, had no other way but to take Sanctuary at the Holy Table in *S. Basils Church* at *Cæsarea*. She was demanded with many fierce and terrible Threatnings, but the Holy Man stoutly refused, although the President was his Mortal Enemy, and sought onely a pretence to ruine him. Many such cases may be met with in the History of the Church. Nor was this a Privilege merely founded upon custom, but settled and ratified by the Laws of *Christian Emperours*; concerning the particular cases whereof, together with the extent and limitation of these *immunities*, there are no less than six several Laws of the Emperours *Theodosius*, *Arca-*
Lib. 9. tit. 45. de his qui ad Ecclesias confugiunt.
dius, and *Theodosius junior*, yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*. But how far those *Asylas* and *Sanctuaries* were good and useful, and to what evil and pernicious purposes they were improv'd in after times, is without the limits of my present task to inquire.

But if in those times there was so little ground for Altars, (as us'd in the

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Part 1. present sense of the *Church of Rome*) there was yet far less for *Images*; and certainly might things be carried by a fair and impartial tryal of Antiquity, the Dispute would soon be at an end; there not being any one just and good Authority to prove, that *Images* were either worshipped, or us'd in Churches, for near upon four hundred years, after *Christ*; and I doubt not but it might be carried much further, but that my business lies mainly within those first Ages of Christianity. Nothing can be more clear, than that the Christians were frequently challenged by the Heathens, (as for having no *Altars* and *Temples*, so that they had no *Images* or *Statues* in them, and that the Christian *Apologists* never denied it, but industriously defended themselves against the Charge, and rejected the very thoughts of any such thing with contempt and scorn; as might be abundantly made good from *Tertullian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, *Minutius Fælix*, *Arnobius*, and *Lactantius*, many of whose Testimonies have been formerly pointed to. Amongst other things *Origen* plainly tells his Adversary, (who had objected this to the Christians) that the *Images* that were to be de-

dedicated to God were not to be carved by the Hand of *Artists*, but to be formed and fashioned in us by the *Word of God*, viz. the *virtues* of Justice and Temperance, of Wisdom and Piety, &c. that conform us to the Image of his only Son. *These* (says he) *are the only Statues formed in our minds, and by which alone we are persuaded 'tis fit to do honour to him who is the Image of the, invisible God, the Prototype and Architypal Patern of all such Images.* Had Christians then given Adoration to them, or but set them up in their places of Worship, with what face can we suppose they should have told the World, that they so much slighted and abhorred them; and indeed what a hearty Detestation they universally shewed to any thing that had (but) the least shadow of Idolatry, has been before prov'd at large. The Council of *Illiberis* that was held in *Spain* sometime before *Constantine* expressly provided against it, decreeing that *no pictures ought to be in the Church, nor that any thing that is worshipped and adored should be painted upon the walls.* Words so clear and positive, as not to be evaded by all the little shifts and Glosses which the Expositors

Part I.

Can. 36. p. 50.

Part I. of that *Canon* would put upon it. The first use of Statues and Pictures in public Churches was merely Historical, or to add some beauty and ornament to the place, which after Ages improved into Superstition and Idolatry. The first that we meet with upon good Authority, (for all the Instances brought for the first Ages are either false and spurious, or impertinent and to no purpose) is no elder than the times of *Epiphanius*, and then too met with no very welcom Entertainment, as may appear from *Epiphanius* his own Epistle, translated by *S. Hierom*; where the story in short is this: Coming (says he) to *Anablatha*, a Village in *Palestine*, and going into a Church to pray, I espied a Curtain hanging over the door, whereon was painted the *Image of Christ*, or of some Saint; which when I looked upon, and saw the Image of a Man hanging up in the Church, *contrary to the Authority of the Holy Scriptures*, I presently rent it, and advis'd the Guardians of the Church rather to make use of it as a Winding Sheet for some poor mans burying. Whereat when they were a little troubled, and said, 'Twas but just that since I had rent that Curtain I should change it, and give them ano-

*Inter opera
Hieron. to.
2. p. 161.*

Ch.6. **Primitive Christianity.** 149

another. I promis'd them I would, and have now sent the best I could get, and pray intreat them to accept it, and give command that for the time to come no such Curtains, being *contrary to our Religion*, may be hung up in the Church of *Christ*; it more becoming your place solicitously to remove whatever is offensive to, and unworthy of, the Church of *Christ*, and the People committed to your charge. This was written to *John Bishop of Jerusalem*, in whose Diocese the thing had been done: and the case is so much the more pressing and weighty, by how much the greater esteem and value *Epiphanius* (then Bishop of *Salamine in Cyprus*) for his great Age and excellent Learning, had in the Church of God. This Instance is so home and pregnant, that the Patrons of *Image-Worship* are at a mighty loss what to say to it, and after all are forced to cry out against it as *Suppositions*. *Bellarmino* brings no less than nine Arguments (if such they may be called) to make it seem probable: but had he been ingenuous, he might have given one reason more true and satisfactory than all the rest, why that part of the Epistle should be thought forged and spurious, viz. Be-

Part I.

De Eccles. Triumph. l. 2. c. 9. col. 776.

Part 1. *cause it makes so much against them.*
 More might be produced to this purpose, but by this I hope 'tis clear enough, that the honest Christians of those times, as they thought it sufficient to pray to God without making their Addressees to *Saints* and *Angels*, so they accounted their Churches fine enough without *Pictures* and *Images* to adorn them.

Their Churches being built and beautified (so far as consisted with the Ability and Simplicity of those days) they sought to derive a greater value and esteem upon them by some peculiar *consecration*; for the Wisdom and Piety of those times thought it not enough barely to devote them to the Publick Services of Religion, unless they also set them apart with Solemn Rites of a formal *dedication*. This had been an ancient custom both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as old as *Solomons Temple*, nay as *Moses* and the *Tabernacle*. When 'twas first taken up by Christians is not easie to determine; onely I do not remember to have met with the footsteps of any such thing in my approved Writer, (for the *Decretal Epistles* every one knows what their Faith is) till the Reign of *Constantine*.

Ch.6. Primitive Christianity. 151

stantine. In his time Christianity being Part I.
become more prosperous and successful,
Churches were every where erected and
repaired; and no sooner were so, but
(as *Eusebius* tells us) they were solemnly
consecrated, and the Dedications cele- *Hist. Eccl. l.*
brated with great Festivity and Rejoy- *10. c. 3. p.*
cing. An Instance whereof he there gives *370.*
of the famous Church of Tyre, at the De-
dication whereof he himself made that
excellent *Oration* inserted into the Body
of his History. About the thirtieth Year
of his Reign he built a stately Church *De vita*
at *Jerusalem*, over the *Sepulchre* of our *Const. l. c.*
Saviour, which was dedicated with sin- *42. 43.*
gular Magnificence and Veneration, and
for the greater honour by his Imperial
Letters he summoned the Bishops, who
from all parts of the *East* were then met
in Council at Tyre, to be present and as-
sisting at the Solemnity. The Rites and
Ceremonies used at these Dedications (as
we find in *Eusebius*) were a great Conflu-
ence of Bishops and Strangers from all
parts, the performance of Divine Offices,
singing of Hymns and Psalms, reading
and expounding of the Scriptures, Ser-
mons, and Orations, receiving the Holy
Sacrament, Prayers, and Thanksgivings,
liberal Alms bestowed on the Poor, and

Part I. great Gifts given to the Church, and in short, mighty Expressions of mutual love and kindness, and universal rejoycing with one another. What other particular Ceremonies were introduced afterwards concerns not me to inquire, onely let me note, that under some of the

*Cod. Theod.
l. 16. tit. 10.
de Pag. Sa-
crific. &
Templis
leg. 25. ubi
vid. Com.
Gothofr.*

*Niceph. Cal.
Hist. Eccl.
l. 8. c. 50. p.
653.*

Christian Emperours, when *Paganism* lay gasping for life, and their Temples were purged and converted into Christian Churches, they were usually consecrated onely by placing a *Cross* in them, as the venerable Ensign of the Christian Religion, as appears by the Law of *Theodosius* the Younger to that purpose.) The memory of the Dedication of that Church at *Jerusalem* was constantly continued and kept alive in that Church, and once a year, to wit on the 14th. of *September*, on which day it had been dedicated, was solemnized with great pomp and much confluence of people from all parts; the Solemnity usually lasting Eight days together. Which doubtless gave birth to that Custom of keeping *anniversary days* of Commemoration of the Dedication of Churches, which from this time forwards we frequently meet with in the Histories of the Church, and much prevailed in after Ages, some shadow whereof still

Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 153

still remains amongst us at this day, in Part I. the *Wakes* observed in several Counties, which in correspondence with the *Encænæ* of the ancient Church, are Annual Festivals kept in Country Villages in memory of the Dedication of their particular Churches.

And because it was a custom in some Ages of the Church, that no Church should be *consecrated* till it was *endowed*, it may give us occasion to inquire what *Revenues* Churches had in those first Ages of Christianity. 'Tis more than probable that for a great while they had no other publick Incomes, than either what arose out of those common Contributions which they made at their usual Assemblies, every one giving or offering according to his Ability or Devotion, which was put into a common Stock or Treasury, or what proceeded from the Offerings which they made out of the Improvement of their Lands, the *Apostolick Canons* providing that their First Fruits Can. 3, 4. should be partly offered at the Church, partly sent home to the *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. The care of all which was committed to the *President* or *Bishop* of the Church; (for who, says the Author of Can. 41. the forecited *Canons*, is fitter to be trusted

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Part I. ed with the *riches* and *revenues* of the Church, than he who is intrusted with the *precious Souls* of Men) and by him disposed of for the Maintainance of the *Clergie*, the Relief of the Poor, or whatever *Necessities* of the Church. As Christianity increased, and Times grew better, they obtained more proper and fixed Revenues, Houses and Lands being settled upon them; for such 'tis certain they had even during the times of Persecution; for so we find in a Law of *Constantine* and *Licinius*, where giving Liberty of Religion to Christians, and restoring them freely to the Churches which had been taken from them, and disposed of by former Emperours. They further add, And because (say they) the same Christians had not onely places wherein they were wont to assemble, but are also known to have had other Possessions, which were not the Propriety of any single person, but belonged to the *whole Body and Community*. All these by this Law we command to be immediately restored to these Christians, to every Society and Community of them what belonged to them. And in a Rescript to *Auulinus* the *Proconsul*, about the same matter, they particularly specify whether

Ensch. l. 20.
c. 5. p. 389.

Ib. p. 390.

ther they be *Gardens* or *Houses*, or what-
 ever else belonged to the Right and Pro-
 priety of those Churches, that with all
 speed they be universally restored to
 them; the same which *Maximinus* also
 (though no good Friend to Christians,
 yet either out of fear of *Constantine*, or
 from the conviction of his conscience,
 awakened by a terrible Sicknes) had or-
 dained for his Parts of the Empire. Af-
 terwards *Constantine* set himself by all
 ways to advance the Honour and Inter-
 ests of the Church. Out of the Tri-
 butes of every City, which were yearly
 paid into his Exchequer, he assigned a
 portion to the Church and Clergy of
 that place, and settled it by a Law, which
 (excepting the short Reign of *Julian*,
 who revoked it) was, as the Historian
 assures us, in force in his time. Where
 any of the Martyrs or Confessors had di-
 ed without Kindred, or been banished
 their Native Country, and left no Heirs
 behind them, he ordained that their
 Estates and Inheritance should be given to
 the Church of that place; and that who-
 ever had seized upon them, or had
 bought them of the Exchequer, should
 restore them, and refer themselves to him
 for what recompence should be made
 them.

Part I.

Lib. 9. c. p.

364.

Socr. Hist. Eccl. l. 1. c. 3. p.

411.

Ib. l. 5. c. 5. p. 600.

Eus. de vita Const. l. 2. c. 56. & seq.

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Part 1. them. He took away the Restraint which
Cod. L. I. tit. 2. de SS. former Emperours had laid upon the
Ecc. leg. 1. Bounty of pious and charitable men, and
gave every man liberty to leave what
he would to the Church. He gave Sala-
ries out of the publick Corn, which
(though taken away by *Julian*) was re-
ib leg. 12. stored by his Successor *Jovianus*, and rati-
fied as a perpetual Donation by the Law
of *Valentinian* and *Marcianus*. After his
time the Revenues of Churches increa-
sed every day, pious and devout persons
thinking they could never enough te-
stifie their Piety to God, by expressing
their Bounty and Liberality to the
Church.

I shall conclude this Discourse by ob-
serving what *respect and reverence* they
were wont in those days to shew in the
Church, as the Solemn Place of Wor-
ship, and where God did more peculiar-
ly manifest his Presence. And this cer-
tainly was very great. They came into
the Church as into the *Palace* of the great
King (as *Chrysostom* calls it) with fear
and trembling, upon which account he
there presses the highest Modesty and
Gravity upon them. Before their going
into the Church they used to *wash*, at
least, their Hands, as *Tertullian* probably
in-

Ep. ad Heb.
in c. 9. hom.
15. tom. 10.
p. 1862.

Tert. de
Orat. c. 11.
p. 133.

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intimates, and *Chrysostom* expressly tells us, Part I.
 carrying themselves while there with the *Chrysost.*
 most profound Silence and Devotion. *hom. 52. in*
 Nay, so great was the Reverence which *Matth. p.*
 they bore to the Church, that the *Empe-* *463. hom.*
ours themselves, who otherwise never *in Joan.*
 went without their Guard about them, *72. p. 371.*
 yet when they (came to) go into the
 Church used to lay down their *Arms*, to
 leave their *Guard* behind them, and to put
 off their *Crowns*, reckoning that the less
 Ostentation they made of Power and
 Greatness there, the more firmly the Im-
 perial Majesty would be entailed upon
 them, as we find it in the Law of *Theo-* *Lib 9. tit.*
dosius and *Valentinian*, inserted at large in- *45. leg. 4.*
 to the last Edition of the *Theodosian Code.* *vid. Chrys.*
 But of this we may probably speak more *Orat. post*
 when we come to treat of the manner of *redit. ab.*
 their Publick Adoration. *exil. to. 4.*
p. 850.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Lords Day, and the Fasts and
Festivals of the Ancient
Church.

Time as necessary to Religious Actions as Place. Fixed Times of Publick Worship observed by all Nations. The Lords Day chiefly observed by Christians. Styled Sunday, and why. Peculiarly consecrated to the Memory of Christs Resurrection. All kneeling at prayer on this day forbidden; and why. Their Publick Assemblies constantly held upon this day. Forced to assemble before day in times of Persecution; thence jeered by the Heathens as Latebrosa & Lucifugax Natio. The Lords Day ever kept as a Day of Rejoycing; all Fast-ing upon it forbidden. The great care of Constantine, and the first Christian Emperours, for the Honour and Observance of this day. Their Laws to that purpose. Their constant and conscientious Attendance upon Publick Worship on the Lords Day. Canons of Ancient Councils about absenting from Publick

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lick Worship. Sabbatum or Saturday Part I. kept in the East as a Religious Day, with all the Publick Solemnities of Divine Worship. How it came to be so. Otherwise in the Western Churches; observed by them as a Fast, and why. This not Universal. S. Ambrose his practice at Millan, and counsel to S. Augustine in the case. Their Solemn Fasts, either Weekly or Annual; Weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays, held till three in the Afternoon. Annual Fast that of Lent, how ancient. Upon what account called Quadragesima. Observed with great strictness. The Hebdomada Magna, or the Holy Week, kept with singular austerity, and the reason of it. Festivals observed by the Primitive Christians. That of Easter as ancient as the times of the Apostles. An account of the famous controversie between the Eastern and Western Churches about the keeping of Easter. The Intemperate Spirit of Pope Victor. Irenæus his Moderate Interposal. The case finally determined by the Council of Nice. The Vigils of this Feast observed with great expressions of Rejoycing. The Bounty of Christian Emperours upon Easter Day. The Feast of Pentecost how ancient. Why sty-

Part I.

styled Whitsunday. Dominica in Albis, why so called. The whole space between Easter and Whitsuntide kept Festival. The Acts of the Apostles why publickly read during that time. The Feast of Epiphany anciently what. Christmas Day, the ancient Observation of it. Epiphany in a strict sense what, and why so called. The Memoriae Martyrum what; when probably first begun. The great Reverence they had for Martyrs. Their Passions styled their Birthday, and why. These Anniversary Solemnities kept at the Tombs of Martyrs. Over these Magnificent Churches erected afterwards. What Religious Exercises performed at those Meetings. The first Rise of Martyrologies. Oblations for Martyrs. How understood in the ancient Writers of the Church. These Festivals kept with great Rejoycing, mutual Love and Charity. Their συμπόσια or common Feasts. Markets held for that purpose in those places. The ill use which after times made of these Memorials.

TIME is a circumstance no less inseparable from Religious Actions than Place; for Man consisting of a Soul and Body, cannot always be actually

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engaged in the Service of God, that's the **Part I.**
privilege of Angels and Souls freed from
the Fetters of Mortality. So long as we
are here, we must Worship God with
respect to our present state, and conse-
quently of necessity have some definite
and particular time to do it in. Now,
that Man might not be left to a floating
uncertainty in a matter of so great im-
portance, in all Ages and Nations men
have been guided by the very Dictates
of Nature, to pitch upon some *certain*
seasons wherein to assemble and meet
together to perform the Publick Offices
of Religion. What and how many were
the Publick *Festivals* instituted and ob-
served either amongst *Jews* or *Gentiles*,
I am not concerned to take notice of.
For the Ancient Christians they ever
had their peculiar seasons, their solemn
and stated times of meeting together to
perform the common Duties of Divine
Worship; of which, because the *LORDS*
DAY challenges the Precedency of all
the rest, we shall begin first with that.
And being unconcern'd in all the Con-
troversies which in the late times were
rais'd about it; I shall only note some
Instances of the Piety of Christians in re-
ference to this Day, which I have ob-
served

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Part I. served in passing through the Writers of those Times. For the name of this Day of Publick Worship, it is sometimes (especially by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*) called *Sunday*, because It happened upon that day of the week, which by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun, and therefore, as being best known to them, the Fathers commonly made use of it in their Apologies to the Heathen Governours. This Title continued after the World became Christian, and seldom it is that it passeth under any other Name in the Imperial Edicts of the first Christian Emperours. But the more proper and prevailing Name was *κυριακη*, or *Dies Dominica*, the *Lords Day*, as 'tis called by S. *John* himself, as being that Day of the Week whereon our Lord made his Triumphant Return from the Dead. This *Justin Martyr* assures us was the true Original of the Title; Upon *Sunday* (says he) we all assemble and meet together, as being the first day wherein God, parting the Darkness from the rude *Chaos*, created the World, and the same day whereon *Jesus Christ* our Saviour rose again from the Dead; for he was crucified the day before *Saturday*, and the day after (which is *Sunday*) he

Rev. 1. 10.

Ap. 2. p. 89.

Ch.7. Primitive Christianity. 163

he appeared to his Apostles and Disci- Part I.

ples. By this means observing a *kind* of Analogy and proportion with the *Jewish Sabbath* which had been instituted by God himself. For as that day was kept as a Commemoration of Gods *Sabbath*, or Resting from the Work of Creation, so was this set apart for Religious Uses, as the solemn memorial of *Christs* Resting from the Work of our Redemption in this World, completed upon the day of his Resurrection. Which brings into my mind that Custom of theirs so universally common in those Days, that whereas at other times they *kneeled* at Prayers, on the Lords Day they always prayed *standing*, as is expressly affirmed both by *Justin Martyr* and *Tertullian*; the reason of which we find (in the *Author* of the *Questions and Answers* in *Justin Martyr*. It is (says he) that by this means we may be put in mind both of our

Ap. 2. p. 98.

De Coron. c.

3. p. 102.

Resp. ad.

quest. 113.

p. 468.

Fall by Sin, and our Resurrection or Re-stitution by the Grace of Christ: that for six days we pray upon our knees, is in token of our Fall by sin; but that on the Lords Day we do not bow the knee, does symbolically represent our *Resurrection*, by which, through the Grace of Christ, we are delivered from our sins and the Powers

Part I. of Death. This he there tells us, was a Custom deriv'd from the very times of the Apostles, for which he cites *Irenæus* in his Book concerning *Easter*. And this Custom was maintained with so much vigour, that when some began to neglect it, the Great Council of *Nice* took notice of it, and ordained that there should be a constant *uniformity* in this case, and that on the Lords Day (and at such other times as were usual) men should *stand* when they made their Prayers to God. So fit and reasonable did they think it to do all possible Honour to that Day, on which Christ rose from the Dead. Therefore we may observe all along in the Sacred Story, that after Christs resurrection the Apostles and Primitive Christians did especially assemble upon *the first day of the week*. And whatever they might do at other times, yet there are many Passages that intimate, that the first day of the week was their more Solemn time of meeting. On this Day it was that they were met together when our Saviour first appeared to them, and so again the next week after. On this Day they were assembled when the Holy Ghost so visibly came down upon them, when *Peter* preached that excellent Sermon, converted and bap-

Can. 20.

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 165

baptized 3000 Souls. Thus when S. Paul Part I. was taking his leave at *Troas*, upon the *first day of the week*, when the Disciples came together to *break bread*, i.e. as almost all agree, to celebrate the Holy Sacrament, he preached to them, sufficiently intimating that upon that day 'twas their usual custom to meet in that manner. And elsewhere giving directions to the Church of *Corinth* (as he had done in the like case to other Churches) concerning their contributions to the poor suffering Brethren, he bids them lay it aside upon the first day of the week, which seems plainly to respect their religious Assemblies upon that day, for then it was that every one according to his Ability deposited something to the relief of the Poor, and the uses of the Church. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

After the Apostles, the Christians constantly observed this Day, meeting together for Prayer, expounding and hearing of the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacraments and other Publick Duties of Religion. Upon the day called Sunday Ap. 2. p. 98. (says *Justin Martyr*) all of us that live either in City or Country, meet together in one place: and what they then did he there describes, of which afterwards. This doubtless *Pliny* meant, when giving Lib. 10. ep *Trajan* an account of the Christians, he 97.

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Part 1. tells him, that they were wont to meet together to worship Christ (*stato die*), upon a set certain day, by which he can be reasonably understood to design no other but the Lords day ; for though they probably met at other times, yet he takes notice of this only, either because the Christians, whom he had examin'd, had not told him of their meeting at other times, or because this was their most publick and solemn convention, and which in a manner swallowed up the rest. By a violent persecution of those times the Christians were forced to meet together before day ; so *Pliny* in the same place tells the Emperour, that they assembled *before daylight to sing their morning hymns to Christ*. Whence it is that *Tertullian* so often mentions their *nocturnal convocations* ; for putting the case that his Wife after his decease should marry with a *Gentile-Husband*, amongst other inconveniences, he asks her, whether she thought he would be willing to let her rise from his Bed to go to their *night-meetings* ; and in the case of Persecution he tells *Fabius*, that if they could not celebrate *Dominica solennia*, their Lords-Day Solemnities in the Day times, they had the *night*

Ad uxor.
l.2.c.4.
p.168.

De fug.in
persecut.c.
14p.543.

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night sufficiently clear with the *light* of Part I. Christ. This gave occasion to their spiteful Adversaries to calumniate and asperse them. The Heathen in *Minutius* charges them with their *Night-congregations*, upon which account they are there scornfully called *Latebroſa & lucifugax natio*, an obscure and skulking generation. And the very first thing that *Celsus* objects is, that the Christians had Private and Clancular Assemblies or Combinations: to which *Origen* Answers, that if it were so they might thank them for it, who would not suffer them to exercise it more openly; that the Christian Doctrine was sufficiently evident and obvious, and better known through the World than the Opinion and Sentiments of their best Philosophers; and that if there were some Misteries in the Christian Religion which were not communicated to every one, 'twas no other thing than what was common in the several Sects of their own Philosophy. But to return;

M. Felp. 7.

*Orig. adv.
Cels. 1. p. 4.
-----7.*

They looked upon the *Lords Day* as a time to be celebrated with great expressions of Joy, as being the happy Memory of Christs Resurrection and accordingly restrained whatever might favour of sorrow and sadness; fasting on that day they

Part I.

De Coron.

mil. c. 3. p.

102.

Ep. ad Phi-

lip. p. 112.

Euseb. de

vit. Const.

l. 4. c. 18,

19, 20. p.

534.

prohibited with the greatest severity, accounting it utterly unlawful, as *Tertullian* informs us. It was a very bitter Censure that of *Ignatius* (or whose soever that Epistle was, for certainly it was not his) that whoever *fasts* on a *Lords Day* is a *Murderer of Christ*; however 'tis certain, that they never fasted on those days, no not in the time of *Lent* it self. Nay the *Montanists*, though otherwise great pretenders to Fasting and Mortification, did yet abstain from it on the *Lords Day*. And as they accounted it a joyful and good day, so they did whatever they thought might contribute to the Honour of it. No sooner was *Constantine* come over to the Church, but his principal care was about the *Lords Day*; he commanded it to be solemnly observed; and that by all persons whatsoever; he made it to all a day of *rest*, that men might have nothing to do but to worship God, and be better instructed in the Christian Faith, and spend their whole time, without any thing to hinder them, in Prayer and Devotion, according to the custom and Discipline of the Church. And for those in his Army, who yet remained in their *Paganism* and Infidelity, he commanded them upon *Lords Days* to go out into

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into the Fields, and there pour out their Part I.

Souls in hearty prayers to God. And that none might pretend their own inability to the Duty, he himself composed and gave them a short *Form of Prayer*, which he enjoyned them to make use of every Lords Day. So careful was he that this Day should not be *dishonoured* or *mis-employed*, even by those who were yet *strangers* and *enemies* to Christianity. He moreover ordained, that there

should be no *Courts of Judicature* open upon this Day, no *Suits* or *Trials* Cod. Just. l. 3. tit. 12. de feriis, l. 3.

but that for any Works of Mercy, such as the *emancipating* and setting free of Slaves or Servants, this might be done.

That there should be no Suits nor demanding Debts upon this Day, was confirmed by several Laws of succeeding Cod. Theod. l. 2. tit. 8. de feriis, l. 1. lib. 1. tit. 8.

Emperours; and that no *Arbitrators*, who had the Umpirage of any business lying before them, should at that time have

power to determine or take up Litigious Causes, Penalties being entail'd upon any that transgressed herein. *Theodosius* Ib. l. 1. tit. 5. de spec. Hac. l. 2.

the Great (*An. 386.*) by a second Law ratified one which he had passed long before, wherein he expressly prohibited all Publick *Shews* upon the Lords Day, that the Worship of God might not be confounded.

Part I.
*Ib. Leg. 5.
 Dominico.*

founded with those Prophane Solemnities. This Law the younger *Theodosius* some few Years after confirmed and enlarged, Enacting, that on the Lords Day (and some other Festivals there mentioned) not onely *Christians*, but even *Jews* and *Heathens* should be restrained from the pleasure of all *Sights* and *Spectacles*, and the *Theaters* be shut up in every place. And whereas it might so happen, that the *Birth-day* or *Inauguration* of the Emperour might fall upon that Day, therefore to let the People know how infinitely he preferred the Honour of God before the Concerns of his own Majesty and Greatness, he commanded, that if it should so happen, that then the Imperial Solemnity should be put off, and deferred till another day.

I shall take notice but of one Instance more of their great Observance of this Day, and that was their constant *attendance* upon the Solemnities of Publick Worship. They did not think it enough to read, and pray, and praise God at *home*, but made Conscience of appearing in the *publick* Assemblies, from which nothing but Sickness and absolute Necessity did detain them: and if Sick, or in Prison, or under Banishment, nothing

trou-

troubled them more, than that they Part. I.
 could not come to Church, and joyn
 their Devotions to the Common Services.
 If Persecution at any time forced them
 to keep a little close, yet no sooner was
 there the least Mitigation, but they pre-
 sently returned to their open Duty, and
 publickly met all together. No trivial
 Pretences, no light Excuses were then
 admitted for any ones absence from the
 Congregation, but according to the me-
 rit of the Cause severe Censures were
 passed upon them. The Synod of *Illibe-*
ris provided, that if any man dwelling
 in a City (where usually Churches were
 nearest at hand) should for three *Lords* Can. 21.
Days absent himself from the Church, he P. 28.
 should for some time be suspended the
 Communion, that he might appear to be
 corrected for his fault. They allowed
 no separate Assemblies, no Congrega-
 tions but what met in the Publick
 Church. If any man took upon him to
 make a Breach, and to draw People in-
 to corners, he was presently condemned,
 and a futable Penalty put upon him.
 When *Eustathius* Bishop of *Sebastia*, (a
 man pretending to great strictness and
 austerity of Life) began to cast off the
 Discipline of the Church, and to intro-
 duce

Part. I. duce many odd Observations of his own; amongst others, to condemn Priests that were married, to fast on the Lords Day, and to keep Meetings in Private Houses, drawing away many, but especially *women*, (as the Historian observes) who leaving their Husbands, were led away with error, and from that into great Filthiness and Impurity. No sooner did the Bishops of those Parts discover it, but meeting in Council at Gangra, the *metropolis of Paphlagonia*, about the Year 340, they condemned and cast them out of the Church, passing these two *Canons* amongst the rest: *If any one shall teach that the house of God is to be despised, and the Assemblies that are held in it, let him be accursed. If any shall take upon him out of the Church privately to preach at home, and making light of the Church, shall do those things that belong only to the Church, without the presence of the Priest, and the leave and allowance of the Bishop, let him be accursed.* Correspondent to which, the *Canons* called *Apostolical*, and the Council of *Antioch* ordain, that if any *Presbyter*, setting light by his own *Bishop*, shall withdraw and set up separate Meetings, and erect another Altar (*i. e.* says *Zonaras*, keep un-

lawful

Soz. l. 3. c.
14. p. 521.

Conc. Gangra.
gr. Can. 45.

Can. 31.
Conc. Antioch.
Can. 5.

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lawful Conventicles, preach privately, and administer the Sacrament) that in such a case he shall be *deposed*, as ambitious and tyrannical, and the People communicating with him be *excommunicate*, as being factious and schismatical ; only this not to be done till after the third Admonition. After all that has been said, I might farther shew what esteem and value the first Christians had of the Lords Day, by those great and honourable things they have spoken concerning it ; of which I'll produce but two passages ; the one is, that in the Epistle *ad Magnesios*, which, if not *Ignatius*, must yet be acknowledged an ancient Author. *Let every one* (sayes he) *that loves Christ keep the Lords Day Festival, the Resurrection Day, the Queen and Empress of all days, in which our Life was raised again, and Death conquered by our Lord and Saviour.* The other, that of *Theophilus*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, who speaks thus ; *That both Custom and Reason challenge from us that we should honour the Lords Day, and keep it Festival, seeing on that day it was that our Lord Jesus Christ completed his Resurrection from the dead.*

Pag. 149.

Ediſt. Theoph. apud Balsam. in Synod. rom. 2. part. 1. p. 170.

Next to the Lords Day, the Sabbath

OF

Part I.

or *Saturday*, (for so the word *Sabbatum* is constantly used in the Writings of the Fathers, when speaking of it as it relates to Christians) was held by them in great Veneration, and especially in the *Eastern* Parts honoured with all the Publick Solemnities of Religion. For which we are to know, that the Gospel in those Parts mainly prevailing amongst the *Jews*, they being generally the first Converts to the Christian Faith, they still retained a mighty Reverence for the *Mosaic* Institutions, and especially for the *Sabbath*, as that which had been appointed by God himself, (as the Memorial of his Rest from the Work of Creation) settled by their great Master *Moses*, and celebrated by their Ancestors for so many Ages, as the Solemn Day of their Publick Worship, and were therefore very loth that it should be wholly antiquated and laid aside. For this reason it seemed good to the Prudence of those Times (as in others of the *Jewish* Rites, so in this) to indulge the Humour of that People, and to keep the Sabbath as a Day for Religious Offices. Hence they usually had most parts of Divine Service performed upon that Day ; they met together for Publick Pray-

Prayers, for reading the Scriptures, celebration of the Sacraments, and such like Duties. This is plain, not only from some passages in *Ignatius* and *Clemens* his Constitutions, but from Writers of more unquestionable credit and Authority. *Athanasius* Bishop of *Alexandria* tells us, that they assembled on Saturdays, not that they were infected with *Judaism*, but only to worship *Jesus Christ* the Lord of the Sabbath: and *Socrates* speaking of the usual times of their Public Meeting, calls the Sabbath and the Lords Day, the Weekly Festivals, on which the Congregation was wont to meet in the Church for the performance of Divine Services. Therefore the Council of *Laodicea* amongst other things decreed, that upon *Saturdayes* the Gospels and other Scriptures should be read, that in *Lent* the Eucharist should not be celebrated but upon *Saturday* and the *Lords Day*, and upon those days only in the time of *Lent* it should be lawful to commemorate and rehearse the Names of Martyrs. Upon this day also, as well as upon *Sunday*, all *Fasts* were severely prohibited (an infallible Argument they counted it a Festival day) one *Saturday* in the Year only excepted, viz. that

Part I.

Homil. de
cement. in
init.Hist. Eccl.
l. 6. c. 8.
p. 312.Can. 16.
41. - 51.

Part 1. that before *Easter Day*, which was always observed as a Solemn Fast. Things so commonly known as to need no proof. But though the Church thought fit thus far to correspond with the *Jewish* Converts, as solemnly to observe the Sabbath; yet to take away all offence, and to vindicate themselves from Compliance with *Judaism*, they openly declared, that they did it only in a *Christian way*, and kept it not as a *Jewish Sabbath*, as is expressly affirmed by *Athanasius*, *Nazianzen*, and others; and the forementioned *Laodicean Synod* has a *Canon* to this purpose; *that Christians should not Judaize, and rest from all labour on the Sabbath, but follow their ordinary works, (i. e. so far as consisted with their Attendance upon the Publick Assemblies) and should not entertain such thoughts of it, but that still they should prefer the Lords Day before it; and on that day rest as Christians: but if any were found to Judaize, they should be accursed.*

Athanas.
Homil. de
Sement. to.
1. p. 835.
Can. 29.

Thus stood the case in the *Eastern Church*; in those in the *West* we find it somewhat different. Amongst them it was not observed as a Religious *Festival*, but kept as a *Constant Fast*. The reason whereof (as 'tis given by Pope *Innocent*,

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innocent in an Epistle to the Bishop of *Eugubium*, where he treats of this very case) seems most probable; if (*says he*) we commemorate Christs resurrection not only at *Easter*, but every *Lords day*, and fast upon *Friday*, because 'twas the day of his Passion, we ought not to pass by *Saturday*, which is the middle-time between the days of grief and joy; the Apostles themselves spending those *istis* days (*viz.* *Friday* and the *Sabbath*) in great sorrow and heaviness: and he thinks no doubt ought to be made but that the Apostles fasted upon those two days, whence the Church had a *Tradition*, that the Sacraments were not to be administred on those days, and therefore concludes, that every *Saturday*, or *Sabbath*, ought to be kept a Fast. To the same purpose the Council of *Illiberis* ordained, that a *Saturday* Festival was an error that ought to be reformed, and that men ought to Fast upon every *Sabbath*. But though this seems to have been the general practise, yet it did not obtain in all places of the *West* alike. In *Italy* it self, 'twas otherwise at *Milain*; where *Saturday* was a Festival; and 'tis said in the Life of *S. Ambrose*, who was Bishop of that See, that he constantly

Innocent.
Ep. ad de-
cium Eugu-
bin. c. 4.
Sabbato
vero.

Can. 36.
p. 35

Paulin. in
vit. Ambr.
operibus
Ambr. of.
pr. fix.

N

dined

Part I. dined as well upon *Saturday* as the Lords day, (it being his custom to dine upon no other days but those, and the memorials of the Martyrs) and used also upon that day to preach to the people ; though so great was the prudence and moderation of that good man, that he bound not up himself in these indifferent things, but when he was at *Millain* he dined upon *Saturdays*, and when he was at *Rome* he fasted as they did upon those days : This S. *Augustine* assures us he had from his own mouth ; for when his Mother *Monica* came after him to *Millain* (where he then resided) she was greatly troubled to find the *Saturday* Fast not kept there as she had found it in other places ; for her satisfaction he immediately went to consult S. *Ambrose*, then Bishop of that place, who told him he could give him no better advice in the cause, than to do as he did : *When I come to Rome* (said he) *I fast on the Saturday as they do at Rome, when I am here, I do not fast. So likewise you, to whatsoever Church you come, observe the custom of that place, if you meane not either to give or take offence.* With this answer he satisfied his Mother, and ever after when he thought of it looked upon

*Ad Janu-
ar. Epist.*

118.col.

357.tom.2.

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on it as an *Oracle* sent from *Heaven*. So Part I.
 that even in *Italy* the *Saturday* Fast was
 not universally observed. Nay, a very
 learned man (and a Bishop of the *Roman*
 Church) thinks it highly probable, that
 for the first Ages especially, *Saturday*
 was no more kept as a Fast at *Rome*,
 than in the Churches of the *East*: though
 the great argument whereby he would
 establish it (*viz*) because some *Latine*
 Churches, who must needs follow the
 pattern of the Church of *Rome*, did not
 keep it so, is very infirm and weak;
 and needs no more then that very in-
 stance of the Church of *Millain* to re-
 fute it, which though under the *Popes*
 nose, did not yet keep that day as a
 Fast, although this was many years af-
 ter it had been so established and ob-
 served at *Rome*.

Albasp. de
ver. Eccl.
rit. obs.
 134.90.

And now that I am got into this busi-
 ness, I shall once for all dispatch the
 matter about their *Fasts*, before I pro-
 ceed to their other Festivals. 'Tis cer-
 tain the ancient Christians had two sorts
 of solemn Fasts, *weekly* and *annual*. Their
weekly Fasts (called *jejunia quartæ &*
sextæ feriæ) were kept upon *Wednesdays*
 and *Fridays*, appointed so as we are
 told for this reason, because on *Wed-*

Part I. *nesday* our Lord was betrayed by *Judas*,
Vid. Con- on *Friday* he was crucified by the *Jews*.
flit. App. This custom *Epiphanius* (how truly I
l. 5. c. 14. know not) refers to the Apostles, and
p. 929. l. 7. elsewhere tells us, that those days were
c. 24. p. observed as Fasts through the whole
978. World. These Fasts they called their
Serm. Com. *Stations* (not because they stood all the
pen. p. 456. while, but by an allusion to the *military*
Heret. 85. *Stations*, and keeping their Guards, (as
p. 387. *Tertullian* observes, they kept close at
De Orat. c. it) and they usually lasted *(ἑως ὥρας ἐννάτης)*
14. p. 135. as *Epiphanius* informs us, till the ninth
Serm. Com. hour. i. e. till three of the clock in the
pend. de Afternoon, at which time having ended
fid. p. 456. their Fast devotions, they received the
De ieiun. *Eucharist*, and then broke up the Stati-
c. 13. p. on, and went home; whence it is, that
551. *Tertullian* calls them *stationum semijeju-*
De Orat. c. *nia*, the *half Fasts of Stations*: and he
14. p. 135. seems to censure the practice of some,
 who having privately resolved upon an
 entire Fast of the whole day, refused to
 receive the *Eucharist* at the publick sta-
 tionary Fasts, because they thought that
 by eating and drinking the Sacramental
 Elements, they put a period to their
 Fasting: for it was usual in those times
 with many, after the stationary Fasts
 were ended, to continue (and hold on)
 the

Vid. de iei-
jun. p. 543.
Ap. 544.
E.

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity.

181.

the Fast until the evening. The Historian tells us, that it had been a very ancient custom in the Church of *Alexandria*, upon these days to have the Scriptures read and expounded, and all other parts of Divine Service, except the Celebration of the Sacrament, and that it was chiefly in those days that *Origen* was wont to teach the People: whether the omitting of the Sacrament then might be a peculiar custom to that Church, I know not, certain I am, 'twas upon those days administred in other places. So *S. Basil*, enumerating the times how oft they received it every week, expressly puts *Wednesday* and *Friday* into the number. The remains of these *primitive Stations* are yet observed in our Church at this day, which by her 15 Canon has ordained, *That though Wednesdays and Fridays be not holy days, yet that weekly upon those times Minister and People shall resort to Church at the accustomed hours of prayer.*

Their *Annual Fast* was that of *Lent*, by way of preparation to the Feast of our Saviours Resurrection, this (though not in the modern use of it) was very ancient, though far from being an *Apostolical Canon*, as a learned Prelate of our

Part I.

Socrat. l. 5. c. 22, p. 28.

Tom. 3. E. p. 289.
p. 279.

B. Tol. Duct: Dub. lib. 3. c. 4. p. 529.

Part I. Church has fully proved. From the very first Age of the Christian Church 'twas customary to Fast before *Easter*; but for how long, it was variously observed according to different times and places; some Fasting so many days, others so many weeks, and some so many days on each week; and 'tis most probably thought, that it was at first styled *πεντηκωστή*, or *Quadragesima*, not because 'twas a Fast of *forty days*, but of *forty hours*, begun about twelve on *Friday* (the time of our Saviours falling under the power of Death) and continued till *Sunday morning*, the time of his rising from the dead. Afterwards it was enlarged to a longer time, drawn out into more days, and then weeks, till it came to three, and at last to six or seven weeks. But concerning the different observations of it in several places, let them who desire to know more consult *Socrates* and *Sozomen*, who both speak enough about it. This *Quadragesimal* Fast was kept in those times with great Piety and Religion, people generally applying themselves with all seriousness to acts of penance and mortification, whence *Chrysostom* calls *Lent* the Remedy and *Physick* of our Souls; and to the

Id. ib. vid.
Thorndike
rel. assembl.
c. 8. p. 276.

Socrat. l. 5.
c. 22.
Sozom. l. 7.
c. 19.

Hm. 1. in
Genom.
2. f. 1.

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the end that the observation of it might be more grave and Solemn, *Theodosius* M. and his Collegue Emperours passed two Laws, that during the time of *Lent* all Proceſs and Inquiry into criminal actions ſhould be ſuſpended, and no corporal puniſhments inflicted upon any; it being unfit (as the ſecond of thoſe Laws expreſſes it) that in the holy time of *Lent* the *Body* ſhould ſuffer puniſhment, while the *Soul* is expecting abſolution. But with what care ſoever they kept the preceding parts, 'tis certain they kept the cloſe of it with a mighty ſtrictneſs and aſterity, I mean the laſt week of it, (that) which immediately preceded the Feaſt of *Eaſter*; this they conſecrated to more peculiar acts of Prayer, Abſtinence, and Devotion; and whereas in the other parts of *Lent* they ended their Faſt in the evening, in this they extended it to the Cock-crowing, or firſt glimpe of the morning; to be ſure they ended it not before midnight, for to break up the Faſt before that time was accounted a piece of great prophaneſs and intemperance, as *Dionyſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria* determines in a Letter to *Baſilides*, wherein he largely and learnedly ſtates the caſe. This was the

Part 1.
Cod. Theod. lib. 9. Tit. 3. de Queſtion. 4. & 5.

Conſtit. A. poſt. l. 5. c. 17, 18. p. 932. Epiphani. λόγ. συντομ. p. 466.

Apud Zonar. in Synod. Tom. 2. part. 1. p. 1.

Part. I. *Hebdomada magna*, the great (or holy) week : so called (says *Chrysostom*) not that it has either more *hours* or *days* in it than other weeks, but because this is the week in which *truly great* and *inestimable* good things were purchased for us; within this time death was conquered, the curse destroyed, the Devils tyranny dissolved, his instruments broken, Heaven opened, Angels rejoyced, the partition-wall broken down, and God and man reconciled. For this cause we call it the *great week*, for this cause men fast, and watch, and do Alms, to do the greater honour to it : the Emperours themselves, to shew what veneration they have for this time, commanding all Suits and Proccesses at Law to cease, Tribunal-doors to be shut up, and Prisoners to be set free, imitating herein their great Lord and Master, who by his death at this time delivered us from the prison and the chains of sin; meaning herein those Laws of *Theodosius*, *Gratian*, and *Valentinian* : which we lately mentioned.

We proceed now to enquire what other Festivals there were in those first Age of the Church, which I find to be chiefly these : *Easter*, *Whitsuntide*, and *Epiphany*,

Epiphany, which comprehended two, **Part I.**

Christmas and *Epiphany*, properly so called. I reckon them not in their proper order, but as I suppose them to have taken place in the Church. Of these *Easter* challenges the precedence, both for its antiquity, and the great stir about it. That in and from the very times of the Apostles (besides the weekly returns of the Lords day) there has been always observed an *Anniversary Festival* in memory of *Christs Resurrection*, no man can doubt, that has any insight into the affairs of the Ancient Church ; all the dispute was about the particular time when it was to be kept, which became the matter of as famous a Controversie as any that in those Ages exercised the Christian World. The state of the case was briefly this ; the Churches of *Asia* the less kept their *Easter* upon the same day, whereon the Jews celebrated their *Passover*, viz. upon the first day of the first Month (which always began with the appearance of the Moon) mostly answering to our *March*, and this they did, upon what day of the week soever it fell, and hence were stiled *Quartodecimans*, because keeping *Easter* (*quarta decima Luna*, upon the

Part I. 14 day after the *pasch* or appearance of the *Moon*. The other Churches, and especially those of the *West*, did not follow this custom, but kept *Easter* upon the Lords day following the day of the Jewish Passover, partly the more to honour the day, and partly to distinguish between Jews and Christians: the *Asiatics* pleaded for themselves the practice of the *Apostles*; *Polycarpus* Bishop of *Smyrna*, who had lived and conversed with them, having kept it upon that day, together with S. *John* and the rest of the *Apostles*, as *Irenaeus* (who himself knew *Polycarpus*, and doubtless had it from his own mouth) speaks in a Letter about this very thing, though himself was of the other side. And *Polycrates* in a Letter to the same purpose, instances not only in S. *John* but S. *Philip* the *Apostle*, who himself and his whole Family used so to keep it, from whom it had been conveyed down in a constant and uninterrupted observance through all the Bishops of those places, some whereof he there enumerates, and tells us that seven Bishops of that place in a constant succession had been his Kinsmen, and himself the eighth, and that it had never been kept by them upon any other day; this

Euseb. Hist.

Eccl. l. 5.

c. 24. p.

195.

Ibid. p. 191.

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this we are not so to understand, as if Part I.

S. *John* and the Apostles had instituted this Festival, and commanded it to be observed upon *that day*; but rather that they did it by way of *condescension*, accommodating their practice in a matter indifferent to the humour of the *Jewish* Converts (whose number in those parts was very great) as they had done before in several other cases, and particularly in observing the *Sabbath* or *Saturday*.

The other Churches also (says *Eusebius*) had for their Patronage an *Apostolical* ^{Ib.c.23} ^{p.190.} *Tradition*, or at least pretended it; and

were the much more numerous party.

This difference was the spring of great

bustles in the Church; for the Bishops of *Rome* stickled hard to impose their

customs upon the *Eastern* Churches, whereupon *Polycarpus* comes over to

Rome to confer with *Anicetus*, who was then Bishop about it; and though they

could not agree the matter, (yet they) parted fairly. After this *Pope Victor* re-

newed the quarrel, and was so fierce and peremptory in the case, that he either

actually did, or (as a learned man in-

clines rather to think, probably to mollify the *odium* of the Fact) severely threatened to excommunicate those *Eastern*

Churches

Idl.4.c.
14.p.127.

H.Vales.
Annat.in.
Euseb.l.5.
c.24.p.
105.col.1.

Part. I. Churches for standing out against it: this rash and bold attempt was ill resented by the sober and Moderate men of his own party, who writ to him about it; and particularly *Irenæus*, (a man, as *Eusebius* notes, truly answering his name, both in his temper and his life quiet and peaceable) who gravely reprov'd him for renting the Peace of the Church, and troubling so many famous Churches for observing the customs derived to them from their Ancestors, with much more to the same purpose. But the *Asian* Bishops little regarding what was either said or done at *Rome*, still went on in their old course, though by the diligent practices of the other Party, they lost ground, but yet still made shift to keep the cause on foot till the time of *Constantine*, who finding this controversy amongst others much to disquiet the Peace of the Church, did for this and some other reasons summon the great Council of *Nice*, by whom this question was solemnly determined, *Easter* ordained to be kept upon one and the same day throughout the world, not according to the custom of the *Jews*, but upon the *Lords day*, and this decree ratified and published by the Imperial Letters to all the Churches. The

*Euseb. de
vit. Con-
stant. l. 3.
c. 14. 17.*

Ch.7. Primitive Christianity. 189

The Eve of *Vigils* of this Festival Part. I.
 were wont to be celebrated with more
 then ordinary pomp, with solemn watch-
 ings, with multitudes of lighted *Torches*, Naz.Or.2.
in Pasch.
Orat.42.
p.676.
 both in the Churches and their own pri-
 vate houses, so as to turn the Night it
 self into Day, and with the general re-
 sort and confluence of all ranks of men,
 both magistrates and people. This cu-
 stom of lights at that time was, if not be-
 gun, at least much augmented by *Con-* Euseb.de
vit. Const.
l.4.c.22.
p.536.
stantine, who set up Lamps and *Torches*
 in all places as well within the Churches
 as without; that through the whole Ci-
 ty the night seemed to outvye the Sun
 at Noon-day. And this they did (as *Na-*
zianzen intimates) as a *prodromus* or Ibid.p.
677.
 forerunner of that *great* light, even the
Sun of Righteousness, which the next day
 arose upon the World. For the *Feast* it Ibid.& O-
rat.19.
p.304.
 self, the same Father calls it the holy and
 famous *Passover*, a day which is the *Queen*
 of days, the *Festival* of *Festivals*, and
 which as far excels all other, even of
 those which are instituted to the honour
 of *Christ*, as the *Sun* goes beyond the
 other *Stars*. A time it was famous for
 works of *mercy* and *charity*, every one
 both of *Clergy* and *Laity*, striving to con-
 tribute liberally to the poor : a duty
 (as

Part I. (as one of the *Ancients* observes) very congruous and futable to that happy season; for what more fit, than that such as beg relief should be enabled to rejoyce at that time, when we remember the common fountain of our mercies. Therefore no sooner did the morning of this day appear, but *Constantine* used to arise, and in imitation of the love and kind- of our blessed *Saviour*, to bestow the richest and most noble gifts, and to diffuse the influences of his bounty over all parts of his Empire. And his Example herein it seems was followed by most of his successors, who used upon this Solemnity by their Imperial Orders to release all *Prisoners*, unless such as were there for more heavy and notorious crimes, high Treason, Murders, Rapes, Incest, and the like. And *Chrysostom* tells us of a Letter of *Theodosius* the Great, sent at this time throughout the Empire, wherein he did not only command, that all Prisoners should be released and pardoned, but wished he was able to recall those that were already executed, and to restore them to life again. And because by the negligence and remissness of messengers, or any accident, those Imperial Letters might sometimes happen to
come

*Commod.
instruction.
c. 75. p. 57.*

*Euseb. ut
supra.*

*Hm. 20.
ad pop. An-
tioch. p.
230. tom.
1.*

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come too late, therefore *Valentinian* the Part 1.
 younger provided by a standing Law,
 that whether order came or not, the
 Judges should dispence the accustomed Lib. 9.
Theod. tit.
38. de in-
dulg. l. 8
 indulgence, and upon *Easter* day in the
 morning cause all Prisons to be open,
 the Chains to be knock'd off, and the
 persons set at liberty.

The next Feast considerable in those
 primitive times, was that of *WHITE-
 SUNDAY*, or *Pentecost*, a Feast of great
 eminency amongst the *Jews*, in memory
 of the Law delivered at Mount *Sinai* at
 that time, and for the gathering and
 bringing in of their *Harvest*; and of no
 less note amongst *Christians*, for the *Holy
 Ghosts* descending upon the *Apostles* and
 other Christians, in the visible appearance
 of *fiery cloven-tongues*, which hapned
 upon that day, and those miraculous
 powers that were conferred upon them.
 It was observed with the same respect to
Easter, that the *Jews* did with respect to
 their *Pasover*, viz. (as the word imports)
 just *fifty days* after it, reckoning from
 the second day of that Festival it seems
 to some to have commenced from the first
 rise of Christianity, not only because
 the *Apostles* and the Church were as-
 sembled upon that day, but because
 S.

Part I. S. Paul made so much haste to be at *Jerusalem* the day of *Pentecost*, which they understand of his great desire to keep it there as a *Christian Feast*. But the Argument seems to me no way conclusive, for the Apostle might desire to be there at that time, both because he was sure to meet with a great number of the Brethren, and because he should have a fitter opportunity to preach the Gospel to the *Jews*, who from all Parts flock'd thither to the Feast, as our Saviour himself for the same reason used to go up to *Jerusalem* at all their great and solemn Feasts. But however this was, 'tis certain the observation of it is ancient, 'twas mentioned by *Irenaeus*, in a Book which he wrote concerning *Easter*, as the Author of the *Questions and Responses* in *J. Martyr* tells us; by *Tertullian*, and after him by *Origen* more then once. This Feast is by us stiled *Whitsunday*, partly because of those vast diffusions of *light* and *knowledge* which upon this day were shed upon the *Apostles*, in order to the *enlightning* of the World; but principally because this (as also *Easter*) being the stated time for *Baptism* in the ancient Church, those who were baptised put on *white Garments*, in token of that
pure

Quest. 115.

*Tert. de
Idol. c. 14.
p. 94.
Adv. Cels.
l. 8. p. 392.*

pure and *innocent* course of life they had now engaged in, (of which more in its proper place.) This white Garment they wore till the next *Sunday* after, and then laid it aside; whence the *Octave* or *Sunday* after *Easter* came to be styled *Dominica in Albis*, the *Sunday in white*, it being then that the new baptized put off their white Garments. We may observe, that in the Writers of those times the *whole space of fifty days* between *Easter* and *Whitsunday* goes often under the name of *Pentecost*, and was in a manner accounted Festival, as *Tertullian* informs us, and the forty third *Canon* of the *Illiberitan Council* seems to intimate. During this whole time Baptism was conferred, all Fasts were suspended and counted unlawful, they prayed standing as they did every Lords Day; and at this time read over *the Acts of the Apostles*, wherein their Sufferings and Miracles are recorded, as we learn from a Law of the younger *Theodosius*, wherein this custom is mentioned, and more plainly from *S. Chrysostom*, who treats of it in an *Homily* on purpose, where he gives this reason why that Book, which contained those Actions of the Apostles, which were done after *Pentecost*,

Part I.

Tert. de Idol. c. 14. de Bapt. c. 19. de Cor. Mil. c. 3. Vid. Max. Taurin. Homil. 3. de S. Pentec. p. 223.

Co. Th. l. 15. tit. 5. l. 5. Sermon. 73. Cur. Ast. App. legatur in Pentec. tom. 5.

O

should

Part I. should yet be read before it, when as at all other times those parts of the Gospel were read which were proper to the season, because the Apostles Miracles being the grand *confirmation* of the truth of Christs *Resurrection*, and those Miracles recorded in that Book, it was therefore most proper to be read next to the Feast of the Resurrection.

Epiphāny succeeds: This word was of old promiscuously used either for the Feast of Christs *Nativity*, or for that which we now properly call by that name. Afterwards the Titles became distinct; that of Christs *Birth* (or as we now term it *CHRISTMAS DAY*) was

Εἰς τὰ θε-
οφάνια,
Orat. 38. p.
613.

called γενέθλια the *Nativity*, and Θεοφάνια the *Appearances of God in the flesh*; two Names importing the same thing, as *Naxianzen* notes. For the Antiquity of it, the first footsteps I find of it are in the second Century, though I doubt not but it might be celebrated before, mentioned by *Theophilus* Bishop of *Cæsaria*, about the time of the Emperour *Commodus*. But if any credit might be given to the *Decretal* Epistles, it was somewhat elder than that, Pope *Telesphorus*, who lived under *Antoninus Pius*, ordaining Divine Service to be celebrated, and an Angelical Hymn

Decret. Te-
lesph. fest.
Nocte vere.

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to be sung the night before the *Nativity* of our *Saviour*. However that it was kept before the times of *Constantine*, we have this sad instance. That when the persecution raged under *Dioclesian*, who then kept his Court at *Nicomedia*, amongst other acts of barbarous cruelty done there, finding multitudes of Christians young and old met together in the Temple, upon the day of *Christs Nativity*, to celebrate that Festival, he commanded the Church doors to be shut up, and Fire to be put to it, which in a short time reduced them and the Church to ashes. I shall not dispute whether it was always observed upon the same day that we keep it now, the *twenty fifth of December*; it seems probable that for a long time in the *East* it was kept in *January*, under the name, and at the general time of the *Epiphania*, till 'receiving more light in the case from the Churches of the *West*, they changed it to this day. Sure I am *S. Chrysostom* in Homily on purpose about this very thing affirms, that it was not above ten years since, in that Church (*i.e. Antioch*) it began first to be observed upon that day, and there offers several reasons to prove that to be the true day of *Christs Nativity*.

*Niceph. H. Eccl. l. 7. c. 6. p. 446. For-
san ex Sim. Metaphrast. qui eadem habet in Martyr. Ind. & Donn. apud Sur. ad 26 Dec. tom. 6.*

Serm. 31. 10. 5. p. 417.

196 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part I. The Feast of *Epiphany*, properly so called, was kept on the *sixth of January*, and had that name from a threefold *apparition* or manifestation commemorated upon that day, which all happened, though not in the same year, yet upon the same day of the year. The first was the *appearance* of the *Star*, which guided the wise men to Christ. The second was the famous *appearance* at the *Baptism of Christ*, when all the Persons in the Holy Trinity did sensibly manifest themselves, the *Father* in the *voice* from Heaven, the *Son* in the River *Jordan*, and the *Holy Ghost* in the visible shape of a *Dove*. This was ever accounted a famous Festival; and

*Hom. 23. de
Bapt. Christi,
tom. 1.
p. 278.*

as *S. Chrysostom* tells us, was properly called *Epiphany*, because he came in a manner into the world *incognito*; but at his Baptism openly appeared to be the Son of God, and was so declared before the world. At this time it was that by his going into the River *Jordan* he did sanctifie water to the mystical washing away of *sin*, (as our Church expresses it) in memory whereof, *Chrysostom* tells us, they used in this Solemnity at midnight to draw water, which they looked upon as consecrated this day, and carrying it home to lay it up, where it would

Ibid.

re-

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remain pure and uncorrupt for a whole Part 1. year, sometimes two or three years together, the truth whereof must rest upon the credit of that good man. The third *manifestation* commemorated at this time was that of Christs *Divinity*, which appeared in the first Miracle that he wrought in turning *water into wine*; therefore 'twas called *Bethphania*, because it was done in the *house* of that famous Marriage in *Cana of Galilee*, which our Saviour honoured with his own presence. All these three Appearances contributed to the Solemnity of this Festival.

But beside these, there was another sort of Festivals in the Primitive Church, kept in commemoration of *Martyrs*. For the understanding of which we are to know, that in those sad and bloody times, when the Christian Religion triumphed over Persecution, and gained upon the world by nothing more than the constant and resolute Sufferings of its Professors, whom no Threatnings or Torments could baffle out of it; the people generally had a vast reverence for those who suffered thus deep in the cause of Christianity, and laid down their Lives for the confirmation of it. They

Part I. looked upon *Confessors* and *Martyrs* as the great *Champions* of their Religion, who *resisted unto blood*, and died upon the Spot to make good its ground, and to maintain its honour and reputation; and therefore thought it very reasonable to do all possible Honour to their Memories, partly that others might be encouraged to the like patience and fortitude, and partly that virtue even in this world might not lose its reward. Hence they were wont once a year to meet at the *Graves of Martyrs*, there solemnly to recite their Sufferings and their Triumphs, to praise their Virtues, and to bless God for their pious Examples, for their holy Lives, and their happy Deaths, for their Palms and Crowns. These Anniversary Solemnities were called (*Memoria Martyrum*), The Memories of the Martyrs, a Title mentioned by *Cyprian*, but certainly much older than his time; and indeed when they were first taken up in the Church, is I think not so exactly known. The first that I remember to have met with, is that of *Polycarp* (whose Martyrdom is placed by *Eusebius Anno 163*, under the third Persecution) concerning whose Death and Sufferings the Church of *Smyrna* (of which

Epist. 37.
P. 51.

Euseb. Chron.
ad An. 163

he

he was Bishop) giving an account to the **Part I.**
 Church of *Philomelium*, and especially *Enseb. Hist.*
 of the place where they had honoura- *Eccl. l.4.c.*
 bly entombed his Bones, they do profess *15.p.135.*
 that (so far as the malice of their Enemies
 would permit them, and they prayed
 God nothing might hinder it) they
 would assemble in that place, and cele-
 brate the *Birth-day* of his Martyrdom
 with joy and gladness. Where we may
 (especially observe, that this Solemnity
 is styled his *Birth-day*, and indeed so the
 Primitive Christians used to call the days
 of their Death and Passion, (quite con-
 trary to the manner of the *Gentiles*, who
 kept the *Natalitials* of their famous men)
 looking upon these as the true days of
 their Nativity, wherein they were freed
 from this Valley of Tears, these Regions
 of Death, and *born again* unto the Joys
 and Happiness of an endless Life. The
 same account *Origen* gives (if that Book
 be his, a very ancient Author however) *Expos. in*
 We keep (says he) the Memories of the *Joh. l.3. fol.*
 Saints, of our Ancestours and Friends *39. rom. 2.*
 that die in the Faith, both rejoycing in
 that rest which they have obtained, and
 begging for our selves a pious *consum-*
mation in the Faith. And we celebrate
 not the Day of their *Nativity*, as being

Part 1. the *inlet* to sorrow and temptation ; but of their *death*, as the *period* of their miseries, and that which sets them beyond the reach of temptations. And this we do, both *Clergie* and *People* meeting together, inviting the poor and needy, and refreshing the Widows and the Orphans ; that so our Festival may be both in respect of them whom we commemorate, the Memorial of that happy rest which their departed Souls do enjoy ; and in respect of *us* the *odour* of a *sweet smell* in the sight of God. Under *Constantine* these days were commanded to be observed with great care and strictness, enjoining all his *Lieutenants* and *Governours* of *Provinces*, to see the *Memorials* of the *Martyrs* duly honoured ; and so sacred were they accounted in those days, that it was thought a piece of prophaneness to be absent from them ; therefore *S. Basil* thought he could not use a more solemn argument to persuade a certain Bishop to come over to him upon this occasion, than to adjure him by the respect he bore to the *memories* of the *Martyrs*, that if he would not do it for his, yet he should for their sakes, towards whom it was unfit he should shew the least disregard. Hence

it

De vita
Const. l. 4. c.
23. p. 536.

Epist. 336.
to. 3. p. 328.

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it is that *Libanius* sometimes takes no-Part I.
 tice of the *Christians* under no other cha-
 racter than this, *Enemies to the Gods*, (τὸς *Apolog.*
ἐπὶ τῶς τοῖς) that hannt and frequent *pro doct.*
Tombs and Sepulchres. For the time of *sua, p. 592.*
 these assemblies it was commonly once a
 year, viz. upon the day of their martyr-
 dom, for which end they took particu-
 lar care to keep *Registers* of the days of
 the Martyrs passions. So *Cyprian* ex-
 pressly charges his *Clergie* to note down *Loco supra*
 the days of their decease, that there *annot.*
 might be a commemoration of them a-
 mongst the *memories* of the Martyrs.
Theodoret tells us, that in his time they
 did not thus assemble once or twice, or
 five times in a year, but kept frequent *De Cur.*
 memorials, oftentimes every day cele- *Græc. af-*
 brating the memorials of Martyrs with *fest. Serm.*
 hymns and praises unto God. But I *8. de mar-*
 suppose he means it of days appointed *tyrib. p.*
 to the memory of *particular* Martyrs, *121.*
 which being then very numerous, their
 memorials were distinctly fixed upon
 their proper days, the Festival of *S. Pe-*
ter, or *S. Paul*, *Thomas*, *Sergius*, *Marcel-*
lus, &c. as he there enumerates them.
 For the *places*, these solemnities were
 kept at first at the *Tombs* where the Mar-
 tyrs had been buried, which usually
 were

Part 1. were in the *Cæmeteria* or Churchyard, distinct in those times from their places of Publick Worship, and at a great distance from them, as being commonly without the Cities. Here their Burying places were in large *Cryptæ* or *Grots* under ground, where they celebrated these Memorials, and whither they used to retire for their common Devotions in times of great Persecution, when their Churches were destroyed or taken from them. And therefore when *Æmilian* the Governour of *Ægypt* under the Reign of *Valerian* would screw up the Persecution against Christians, he forbade their Meetings, and that they should not so much as assemble in the places which they called their *Churchyards*; (the same) Privilege which *Maximinus* also had taken from them. By reason of the darkness of these places, and their frequent assembling there in the *night*, to avoid the fury of their Enemies, they were forced to use *Lights* and *Lamps* in their publick Meetings; but they who make this an Argument to patronize their burning of Lamps and Wax Candles in their Churches at Noon-day, (as 'tis in all the great Churches of the *Roman* Communion) talk at a strange rate of wild in-consequence.

Euseb. Hist.

l. 7. c. 11. p.

258. l. 9. c. 2.

p. 349.

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consequence. I am sure *S. Hierom*, when charged with it, denied that they used any in the day time, and never but at night when they rose up to their Night Devotions. He confesses indeed 'twas otherwise in the *Eastern Churches*, where when the *Gospel* was to be read, they set up Lights as a token of their *rejoycing* for those happy and glad Tidings that were contained in it, *Light* having been ever used as a symbol and representation of *joy* and *gladness*; a custom probably not much elder than his time. Afterwards when Christianity prevailed in the world, the Devotion of Christians erected Churches in those places; the Temples of the Martyrs, (*says Theodoret*) being *spacious* and *beautiful*, richly and curiously adorned, and shining with great lustre and brightness. These Solemnities as the same Author informs us, were kept not like the Heathen Festivals with *luxury* and *obscureness*, but with *devotion* and *sobriety*, with Divine *Hymns* and Religious *Sermons*, with fervent *Prayers* to God, mixed many times with sighs and tears. Here they heard Sermons and Orations, joyned in publick Prayers and Praises, received the Holy Sacrament, offered Gifts and Charities

Part I.

Adv. Vigilant. tom. 2. p. 123.

Ibid.

Vide Constit. App. 18.

c. 45. p. 1040.

Vide Epiph.

λόγ. συν-

τομα. περ-

της. p. 465.

for

Part I. for the poor, recited the names of the Martyrs then commemorated with their due eulogies and commendations, and their virtues propounded to the imitation of the hearers. For which purpose they had their set *Notaries*, who took the *acts, sayings, and sufferings* of Martyrs, which were after *compiled* into particular *Treatises*, and were recited in these annual meetings, and this was the first original of *Martyrologies* in the Christian Church. From this custom of offering up prayers, praises, and alms at those times, it is that the Fathers speak so often of *oblations and sacrifices* at the Martyrs Festivals. *Tertullian* often, upon an anniversary day (says he) we make oblations for them that are departed, in memory of the *Natalitia or Birth days*, and to the same purpose elsewhere. As oft (says *Cyprian*) as by an anniversary commemoration we celebrate the passion days of the Martyrs, we always offer sacrifices for them; and the same phrases oft occur in many others of the Fathers. By which 'tis evident, they meant no more than their publick prayers, and offering up praises to God for the piety and constancy, and the excellent examples of their Martyrs, their celebrating the *Eucharist*

De Cor.

mil.c.3.

p.102.

De exhort.

Castil.p.

523.

De monog.

p.531.

Epist.34.

p.48. & Ep.

37.

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 205

charist at these times, as the *commemo-* Part I.
ration of Christs *Sacrifice*, their obla-
 tion of *alms* and charity for the poor,
 every one of which truly may, and of-
 ten is stiled a *sacrifice* or *oblation*; and
 are so understood by some of the more
 moderate even of the *Romish* Church:
 and with good reason, for that they did
 not make any real and formal *sacrifices*
 and *oblations* to Martyrs, but only *honour*
 them as *holy men*, and *friends to God*,
 who for his and our Saviours honour
 and the truth of Religion, chose to lay
 down their lives, I find expressly affirmed
 by *Theodoret*.

Rigalt. Obs.
ad Cypr.
H. Vales.
annot. ad
Euseb. Hist.
annot. p.
262. Pi-
charel. de
missa. p.
103, 107.
Loco supra
cit. p. 116.

These Festivals being times of mirth
 and gladness, were celebrated with great
 expressions of Love and Charity to the
 Poor, and mutual rejoycings with one
 another. Here they had their *συνήθεια*,
 or *Feasts*, every one bringing some-
 thing to the *common* Banquet, out of
 which the Poor also had their share.
 These Feasts at first were very sober
 and temperate, and such as became the
 modesty and simplicity of Christians, as
 we heard before out of *Theodoret*, and
 is affirmed before him by *Constantine*, in
 his *Oration* to the *Saints*. But degene-
 rating afterwards into excess and intem-
 perance,

Cap. 12.
p. 585.

Part 1. perance, they were every where de-
 claimed against by the Fathers, till they
 were wholly laid aside. Upon the ^{an} ac-
 count of these Feasts, and for the better
 making provisions for them, we may con-
 ceive it was that *Markets* came to be
 kept at these times and places, for of
 such *S. Basil* speaks, ἀγοραῖαι ἐν τοῖς μαρτυ-
 ρίοις γινόμεναι, *Markets held at the Memori-
 als and Tombs of Martyrs* ; these he con-
 demns as highly *unsuitable* to those So-
 lemnities which were onely instituted
 for Prayer, and a Commemoration of the
 Virtues of good men, for our encourage-
 ment and imitation, and that they ought
 to remember the severity of our other-
 wise meek and humble Saviour, who
 whipp'd the *Buyers* and *Sellers* out of the
Temple, when by their Marketings they
 had turned *the house of prayer into a
 den of thieves*. And the truth is, these
 Anniversary Commemorations, though in
 their primitive Institution they are high-
 ly reasonable and commendable ; yet
 through the folly and dotage of men
 they were after made to minister to
 great Superstition and Idolatry : so plain
 is it, that the best and usefulest things
 may be corrupted to bad purposes. For
 hence sprung the Doctrine and Practice
 of

Reg. fus.
 disput. in-
 terreg. 40.
 tom. 28. p.
 589.

of prayer and invocation of Saints, and their intercession with God, their worshipping of Reliques, Pilgrimages, and visiting Churches, and offering at the Shrines of such and such Saints, and such like Superstitious Practices, which in after Ages overrun so great a part of the Christian Church; things utterly unknown to the simplicity of those purer and better times.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Persons constituting the Body of the Church, both People and Ministers.

*The people distinguished into several ranks. Catechumens of two sorts. Gradually instructed in the Principles of the Christian Faith. Accounted onely Christians at large. The more recondite Mysteries of Christianity concealed from persons till after Baptism. Three Reasons assigned of it. How long they remained in the state of Catechumens. The several Classes of Penitents, the *προσβαλόντες*, *ἀκρωμυοί*, *ἐποπίπτοντες*, *συνετέμνυοι*, the *πιστοί*,*

or

Part I.

or the faithful. Their particular stations in the Church. Their great reverence for the Lords Supper. The Clergie why called κληρος. Of two sorts; the highest Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Bishops, as superiour to Presbyters, how ancient by the most learned Opposers of Episcopacy. Their office and privilege what. Chorepiscopi who; their power and privilege above Presbyters. The ἀειοδούλαι or Visitors in every Diocese. Of Metropolitans, what their power and authority above ordinary Bishops; their antiquity. Of Patriarchs, and in what respects superiour to Metropolitans and Archbishops. An account of conforming the external Jurisdiction of the Church to the Civil Government of the Roman Empire. Presbyters, their place and duty. Whether they preached in the presence of the Bishop. Deacons, their Institution, Office, Number. The Archdeacon. Of inferiour Orders. The Subdeacon. The Acholythus. The Exorcist. The Reader. The Door-keeper. What the nature of their several places. Ordination to these Offices how managed. The people present at, and consenting to the Ordination. Sacerdotes prædicari, what. The Christian Discipline in this case

imi-

imitated by the Emperour Severus, in Part 1. appointing Civil Officers. Great Trials and Testimonials to be had of persons to be ordained. Clergie-men to rise by degrees. The Age usually required in those that were to be promoted to the several Orders. Of Deaconesses, their Antiquity, Age, and Office. The great Honour and Respect shewed to Bishops and Ministers. Looked upon as Common Parents. Nothing of moment done without their leave. Their Welcom, and the Honour done them wherever they came. This made good by several Instances, Bishops invested with Power to determine Civil Controversies. The Plentiful Provision made for them. The great Priviledges and Immunities granted by Constantine and his Successors to the Bishops and Clergie, noted out of the Theodosian Code.

FROM the Consideration of Time and Place we proceed to consider the PERSONS that constituted and made up their Religious Assemblies ; and they were either the *Body of the people*, or those who were peculiarly consecrated and set apart for the Publick Ministrations of Religion. For the Body of the

P

peo-

Part. I. people, we may observe, that as *Christianity* at first generally gain'd admission in great Towns and Cities, so all the *Believers* of that place usually assembled and met together: the Christians also of the Neighbour Villages resorting thither at times of Publick Worship. But Religion increasing apace, the Publick Assembly, especially in the greater Cities, quickly began to be too vast and numerous to be managed with any order and conveniency, and therefore they were forced to divide the *body* into particular *Congregations*, who had their *Pastors* and Spiritual Guides set over them, but still were under the superintendency and Care of him that was their *President* or *Bishop* of the place. And according as the Church could form and establish its Discipline, the People either according to their *Seniority* and improvement, or according to the *quality* of the present condition they were under, began to be distinguish'd into several Ranks and *Classes*, which had their distinct places in the Church, and their gradual Admission to the several parts of the Publick Worship. The first were the *CATECHUMENS*, and of these there were two sorts, the *πρωτοι*, or more perfect, such

Balsam.

Zonar.

Aristen. in

Can. 5.

Conc. Neo-

Cesar.

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such as had been *Catechumens* of some Part I. considerable standing, and were even ripe for Baptism; these might stay not only the Reading of the Scriptures, but to the very last part of the first Service. The others were the ἀπλῆστοι, the more rude and imperfect, who stood only amongst the *Hearers*, and were to depart the Congregation as soon as the *Lessons* were read: these were as yet accounted *Heathens*, who applied themselves to the Christian Faith, and were catechized and instructed in the more plain grounds and rudiments of Religion. These Principles were gradually delivered to them, according as they became capable to receive them, first the more plain, and then the more difficult. Indeed they were very shy of imparting the Knowledge of the more recondite Doctrines of *Christianity* to any till after Baptism. So S. Cyril expressly assures us, where speaking to the *illuminate* or Baptised; If during the Catechetical Exercise (says he) a *Catechumen* shall ask thee, what that means which the Preachers say, tell him not, for he is yet without; and these *mysteries* are delivered to thee only. The weak Understanding of a *Catechumen* being no more able to bear such

*Pres. ad
Catech. Il-
lum. p. 13.*

Part I. sublime *mysteries*, than a Sick mans Head can large and immoderate Draughts of Wine. And at the end of his Preface he has this Note, *These Catechetical Discourses may be read by those that are to be baptized, or the Faithful already baptized: but to Catechumens or such as are no Christians, thou mayest not impart them; for if thou dost, expect to give an account to God.*

De Spir. S.
c. 27. p. 352.
tom. 2.

Vid. Dion.
Arenop. de
Eccl. Hier.
arch. c. 1. p.
236.

S. Basil discoursing of the Rites and Institutions of Christianity, divides them into two parts, the *τα κρυψματα*, and the *τα δογματα*. The *τα κρυψματα* were those parts of Religion which might *δημοσιευεσθαι*, be familiarly preached and expounded to the people: The *τα δογματα* were the more sublime and hidden Doctrines and parts of the Christian Faith; and these were *απορητα*, things not rashly and commonly to be divulged, but to be lock'd up in silence. Of this nature were the Doctrines of the Trinity and Hypostatic Union, and such like, especially of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lords Supper. For though they acquainted their Young Hearers with so much of them as was necessary to stir up their Desires, yet as to the main of the things themselves, the Sacramental Symbols, the

man-

manner of their Celebration, the *modus* Part 1.
 of the Divine Presence at the Holy *Eucharist*, the meaning of all those *Mystical* Rites and Ceremonies that were used about them, these were carefully concealed both from *Strangers* and *Catechumens*, and communicated only to those who were solemnly initiated and baptized. Hence that ancient *form* so common in the Sermons and Writings of the Fathers, whereby, when accidentally discouraging before the people of any of these *Mysterious* parts of Religion, they used to fetch themselves off with an

ΙΣΑΖΙΝ ΟΙ ΜΕΜΥΗΜΕΝΟΙ *Chrys. Hom. 67. in Gen. p. 719. tom. 1. & alibi sepius.*
Those that are initiated know what is said.

This was so usual, that this Phrase occurs at least fifty times in the Writings of St. *Chrysostom* only, (as *Casaubon* hath observed: who has likewise noted three Reasons out of the *Fathers* why they so studiously concealed these parts of their Religion. *First*, the nature of the things themselves, so sublime and remote from Vulgar Apprehensions, that they would signify little to *Pagans* or *Catechumens* not yet fully instructed and confirmed in the *Faith*, and would either be lost upon them, or in danger to be derided by them. *Secondly*, that hereby the

Exercit. 16. ad Annal. Bar. S. 43. p. 556.

Part I. *Catechumens* and younger Christians might be inflamed with a greater Eagerness of desire to partake of the Mysteries and Priviledges of the *Faithful*; Humane Nature being desirous of nothing more than the Knowledge of what is kept and conceal'd from us. To help them forward in this, S. *Augustine* tells us, that in their Publick Prayers they were wont to beg of God to inspire the *Catechumens* with a desire of Baptismal Regeneration. The same account *Chrysostom* gives us, this being part of the Form used in their Publick Service, *Let us pray that the most gracious and merciful God would hear the prayers of the Catechumens*; and what it was they prayed for he presently adds, *viz. that they might no longer remain in that State*. Upon these accounts, *initiation* by Baptism, but especially *admission* to the Lords Supper, is amongst other Titles in the Writers of those Times, called *Desiderata*, because so earnestly desired and sought for by those that were not yet taken in. The truth is, till persons arrived at this state they were not accounted *Christians*, (or but in a large sense as *Candidates* that stood in order to it;) and therefore could not satisfy themselves either

Ad Vital.
ep. 107. col.
493.

Hom. 2. in
cap. 1. 1 ad
Cor. p. 740.

Vid. Chrys.
ibid.

to *live* or *die* in that condition, where-Part I.
 in they wanted the great *seals* and *pledges* of their Christianity. *Thirdly*, to be-
 get in mens minds the higher Esteem and
 Veneration for these Religious Myste-
 ries, nothing producing a greater *contempt*
 even in Sacred things, than too much
 Openness and Familiarity. So that a lit-
 tle Obscurity and Concealment might
 seem necessary to vindicate them from
 Contempt, and secure the Majesty and Re-
 verence that was due to them. This made
 the *Fathers* and *Seniors* of the Church
 (says S. Basil) in prescribing Rites and
 Laws, leave many things in the dark, be-
 hind the Veil and Curtain, that they might
 τὸ σμῦνὸν τοῖς μυστηρίοις φυλάττειν, preserve
 the *sacredness* and *dignity* that was due to
 the Mysteries of Religion. For a thing
 (says he) cannot properly be said to be
 a *mystery* when 'tis once *expos'd* to every
 vulgar and common Ear. But of this e-
 nough, if not too much.

Loc. sup.
land.

And as they were careful to keep the
 higher parts of Christianity within the
 Cognizance of the *Faithful*, so they were
 not less careful to teach and instruct the
Catechumens in all those Principles they
 were capable of being taught. This at
 their first coming over was done pri-
 vately

Part I. vately and at home, by persons deputed on purpose to that Office by the Bishop, (as *Balsamon* clearly intimates) till they were sufficiently instructed in the first and more intelligible principles of the Faith. Then they were admitted into the Congregation, and suffered to be present at some parts of the Divine Service, especially the *Sermons*, which were made for the building them up unto higher Measures of Knowledge ; which being ended, they were commanded to *depart* the Church, not being suffered to be present at the more Solemn Rites, especially the Celebration of the Lords Supper. And in this manner they were trained up, till they were initiated by Baptism, and taken into the highest form of Christians. How long persons remained in the state of the *Catechumens* is difficult to determine, it not being always nor in all places alike, but longer in some, and shorter in others, and probably according to the Capacity of the persons. The *Apostolick Constitutions* appoint *three years* for the *Catechumen* to be instructed ; but provide withall that if any one be diligent and virtuous, and have a ripeness of understanding for the thing, he may be admitted into Baptism sooner :

*In Can. 26.
Conc. Laod.*

*Lib. 8. c.
32. p. 1032.*

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sooner : for (say they) not the *space* of Part I. time, but the *fitness* and *manners* of men, are to be regarded in this matter.

The next sort were the *PENITENTS*, such as for some misdemeanours were under the Censures and Severity of the Church, and were gradually to obtain Absolution from it. Of these there were several Degrees, five especially mentioned by S. Gregory of Neo-Cæsaria, who liv'd

Epist. Canon. περί τῶν εἰδωλολάτρ. παγ. Can. 11. p. 121.

about the Year 250. The first were the οἱ περὶ λαοὶ, such as *wept* and *lamented*, and were rather Candidates to be received into the Orders of *Penitents* than *Penitents* properly so called. These usually stood in a squalid and mournful Habit at the *Church Porch*, with tears and great importunity begging of the *Faithful* as they went in, to pray for them.

The second were the ἀκροώμενοι, the *Hearers*, who were admitted to hear the Holy Scriptures read and expounded to the people. Their *station* was at the upper end of the *Narthex*, or first part of the Church, and were to depart the Congregation at the same time with the *Catechumens*. The third *Class* of *Penitents* was that of the προσπίπτοντες, the *Prostrate*,

because Service being ended they fell down before the Bishop, who together with

Soz. Hist. Eccl. l. 7. c. 16. p. 727.

Part I. with the Congregation talling down and making confession in their behalf, after rais'd them up, and laid his Hands upon them. These stood within the Body of the Church next the *Pulpit* or *Reading Pew*, and were to depart together with the *Catechumens*. The fourth were the *Συντάκτοι*, the *Consistentes*, such as stayed with the rest of the Congregation, and did not depart with the *Catechumens*, but after they and the other Penitents were gone out, stayed and joyned in Prayer and Singing (but not in Receiving the Sacrament) with the Faithful. These after some time were advanced into the fifth and last order of the *Communicantes*, (*μετέχιν τῆς ἁγίας ἑωδίας*, S. Gregory calls it) and were admitted to the Participation of the Holy Sacrament. This was the state of the *Penitents* in the Primitive Church. Persons having fully passed through the state of the *Catechuminate*, became then immediate Candidates of Baptism, presented their *names* to the Bishop, and humbly prostrating themselves, begged that they might be entred into the Church. These were called *Competentes*, because they did *competere gratiam Christi*, sue for the Grace of *Christ* conferred in Baptism. The last Rank

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Rank was that of the *μετοί*, or the *FAITHFUL*, who having been baptized and confirmed, and having approved themselves by the long train and course of a strict pious life, were then admitted to the participation of the *Lords Supper*; which being the Highest and most Venerable Mystery of the *Christian Religion*, was not then rashly given to any, but to such only as had run through all other Degrees, and by a course of Piety evidenced themselves to be such real and faithful *Christians*, as that the highest Mysteries and most solemn parts of Religion might be committed to them. This was the highest Order, and looked upon with great regard, and for any of this Rank to lapse and be *overtaken with a fault*, cost them severer penances than were imposed upon the inferior Forms of Christians.

This in short was the state of the *people*. But because 'tis not possible any Body or Community of Men should be regularly managed without some particular Persons to superintend, direct, and govern the affairs of the whole Society, therefore we are next to inquire what Persons there were in the Primitive Church, that were peculiarly *set apart* to

Part I. to steer its Affairs, and to attend upon the Publick Offices and Ministrations of it. That God always had a *peculiar* people, whom he selected for himself out of the rest of Mankind, is too evident to need any Proof. Such were the *Patriarchs*, and the *holy Seed* of old: such the *Jews*, chosen by him above all other Nations in the World. This was his $\kappa\lambda\eta\rho\omicron$, his particular Lot and Portion, comprehending the Body of the People in general. But afterward this Title was confin'd to narrower bounds, and became appropriate to that *Tribe* which God had made choice of to *stand before him*, to wait at his *Altar*, and to minister in the Services of his Worship. And after the Expiration of their *Oeconomy*, was accordingly used to denote the *Ministry of the Gospel*, the persons peculiarly consecrated and devoted to the Service of God in the Christian Church: the Clergy being those, *qui Divino cultui ministeria religionis impendunt* (as they are defin'd in a Law of the Emperour *Constantine*) who are set apart for the *Ministeries* of Religion in matters relating to the *Divine Worship*. Now the whole $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma\ \iota\epsilon\rho\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ (as tis often called in the *Apostles Canons*) the roll of the

C. Tb. l. 16.
tit. 3. de
Episc. Eccl.
& Cler. l. 2.

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the *Clergie* of the ancient Church (taking Part 1. it within the compass of its first four hundred years) consisting of *two sorts* of persons, the *ιερευςοι*, who were peculiarly consecrated to the more *proper* and *immediate* acts of the Worship of God : and the *υπηρεται*, such as were set apart only for the *more mean and common* Services of the Church. Of the first sort were these three, *Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.*

The first and principal Officer of the Church was the President or *BISHOP*, usually chosen out of the *Presbyters*. I shall not here concern my self in the Disputes, whether *Episcopacy* as a superior order to *Presbytery*, was of *Divine Institution* (a Controversie sufficiently ventilated in the late times) it being enough to my purpose, what is acknowledged both by *Blondel* and *Salmasius*, the most Learned Defenders of *Presbytery*, that Bishops were distinct from and superior to Presbyters in the second *Century*, or the *next age* to the Apostles. The main Work and Office of a Bishop was to *teach and instruct* the People, to *administer* the Sacraments, to *absolve* Penitents, to *eject and excommunicate* obstinate and incorrigible Offenders, to
pre-

Part 1. *preside* in the Assemblies of the Clergy, to *ordain* inferior Officers in the Church, to *call them to account*, and to *suspend* or deal with them according to the nature of the Offence, to urge the *observance* of Ecclesiastical Laws, and to *appoint* and institute such indifferent Rites as were for the decent and orderly administration of his Church. In short, according to the Notation of his Name he was a *σκοπός*, a *Watchman* and *Sentinel*, and therefore oblig'd *ἐπισκοπεῖν*, diligently and carefully to *inspect* and observe, to superintend and provide for those that were under his Charge. This, *Zonaras* tells us, was implied in the Bishops *Throne*, being placed *on high* in the most eminent part of the Church, to denote how much 'twas his Duty from thence to overlook, and very diligently to observe the people that were under him. These and many more were the unquestionable Rights and Duties of the Episcopal Office; which because it was very difficult and troublesom for one man to discharge, especially where the *παροικία*, or *Diocese*, (as we now call it) was any thing large, therefore upon the multiplying of Countrey Churches, it was thought fit to take in a *subordinate* sort

In Can. Apost. can. 58.

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sort of *Bishops* called *Chorepiscopi*, *Coun-* Part 1.
try or (as amongst us they have been
called) *Suffragan Bishops*, whose busi-
ness it was to *superintend* and inspect
the Churches in the *Countrey*, that lay
more remote from the City where the
Episcopal See was, and which the Bishop
could not always inspect and oversee in
his own Person. These were the *Vicarii*
Episcoporum, (as they are called in *Isi-*
dore's Version of the thirteenth *Canon*
both of the *Ancyran* and *Neocaesarean*
Council) the Bishops *Deputies*, chosen out
of the fittest and gravest persons. In the
Canon of the last mentioned Council,
they are said to be chosen *in imitation*
of the *Seventy*, not the *Seventy Elders*
which *Moses* took in to bear part of the
Government (as some have *glossed* the
words of that *Canon*) but of the *Seventy*
Disciples, whom our Lord made choice
of, to send up and down the Countries
to preach the Gospel, as both *Zonaras*
and *Balsamon* understand it. And there-
upon, by reason of their great care and
pains, are commanded to be esteemed
very *honourable*. Their Authority was
much greater than that of the *Presbyters*,
and yet much inferior to the *Bishop*. Bi-
shops really they were, though their *power*

*Con. Anti -
och. Can. 10.*

Part I. power confin'd within narrow limits; they were not allowed to ordain either *Presbyters* or *Deacons* (unless peculiarly licens'd to it by the Bishop of the *Dioceſe*) though they might obtain *Subdeacons*, *Readers*, and any inferior Officers under them. They were to be *aſſiſtant* to the Bishop, might be preſent at *Synods* and *Councils*,) to many whereof we find their Subſcriptions) and had

Ib. Can. 8. power to give *Letters of peace*, (i. e. ſuch Letters whereby the Biſhop of one *Dioceſe* was wont to recommend any of his Clergy to the Biſhop of another, that ſo a fair underſtanding and Correſpondence might be maintained between them; a privilege expreſſly denied to any *Preſbyter* whatſoever. But leſt this wandering employment of the *Chorepiſcopi* ſhould reflect any diſhonour upon the Episcopical Office, there were certain *Preſbyters* appointed in their room called *ἐπισκοπῶντες*, or *Viſitors*, often mentioned in the ancient *Canons* and *Acts* of Councils, who being tied to no certain place, were to go up and down the Country, to obſerve and correct what was amiſs. And theſe doubtleſs were thoſe *ἐπιχώριοι Πρεσβύτεροι*, (ſpoken of in the thirteenth Canon of the *Næoceſarian* Coun-

Conc. Laod. Can. 57.

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Council) those *rural Presbyters*, who are Part 1.
there forbid to consecrate the *Eucharist*
in the *City Church*, in the presence of the
Bishop or the *Presbyters* of the *City*.

As Christianity increased and over-
spread all Parts, and especially the Cities of
the Empire, it was found necessary yet far-
ther to enlarge the Episcopal Office, and as
there was commonly a Bishop in every
great City, so in the *Metropolis* (as the *Ro-
mans* called it) the *Mother City* of every
Province (wherein they had Courts of Ci-
vil Judicature) there was an *ARCH-BI-
SHOP* or a *METROPOLITAN*,
who had Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction over
all the Churches within that Province.
He was superior to all the Bishops with-
in those limits; to him it belonged ei-
ther to *ordain* or to *ratify* the elections
and ordinations of all the Bishops with-
in his Province, insomuch that without
his Confirmation they were looked upon
as null and void. Once at least every
year he was to summon the Bishops under
him to a *Synod*, to enquire into and di-
rect the Ecclesiastical affairs within that
Province; to inspect the lives and man-
ners, the opinions and principles of his
Bishops, to admonish, reprove, and su-
spend them that were disorderly and

Q

irregu-

Part I. irregular; if any controversies or contentions hapned between any of them, he was to have the *hearing* and *determination* of them; and indeed no matter of *moment* was done within the whole Province without first consulting him in the case. Besides this *Metropolitan*, there was many times another in the same Province, who enjoyed nothing but that name and title, his *Episcopal See* being by the Emperours *Pragmatic* erected into the dignity of a *Metropolis*. He was only an *Honorary Metropolitan*, without any real power and jurisdiction, and had no other privilege, but that he took place above other ordinary Bishops, in all things else equally subject with them to the *Metropolitan* of the Province, as the Council of *Chalcedon* determines in this case. When this Office of *Metropolitan* first began, I find not, only this we are sure of, that the Council of *Nice* settling the just rights and privileges of *Metropolitan Bishops*, speaks of them as a thing of *ancient date*, ushering in the *Canon* with an ἀρχαία ἐν νεαλείτω, *let ancient custom still take place*. The original of the *institution* seems to have been partly to comply with Peoples occasions, who oft resorted

Can. 12.

Can. 6.

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resorted to the *Metropolis* for dispatch of Part I.
 their affairs, and so might fitly discharge
 their *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* concerns
 both at once; and partly because of the
 great confluence of People to that City,
 that the Bishop of it might have prehe- *Vid. Conc.*
 minence above the rest, and the honour *Antioch.*
 of the *Church* bear some proportion to *Can. 9.*
 that of the *State*.

After this sprang up another *branch*
 of the Episcopal Office, as much supe-
 rior to that of *Metropolitans*, as theirs
 was to ordinary Bishops, these were
 called *PRIMATES* and *PATRI-*
ARCHS, and had jurisdiction over many
 Provinces. For the understanding of this,
 it's necessary to know that when Christi-
 anity came to be fully settled in the world,
 they contrived to model the external
 Government of the Church, as near as
 might be to the Civil Government of
 the *Roman Empire*; the parallel most
 exactly drawn by an *ingenious* person of
 our own Nation; the sum of it is this. *Edward*
 The whole Empire of *Rome* was divi- *Breerwood*
 ded into *Thirteen Dioceses* (so they called *Patriarch.*
 those divisions) these contained about *Government.*
one hundred and twenty Provinces, and e- *of the*
 very Province several *Cities*. Now as in *ancient*
 every City there was a *temporal Magi-* *Church.*
Quest. 1.
Q 2 strate

Part I. strate for the Executing of Justice, and keeping the Peace both for that City, and the Towns round about it, so was there also a *Bishop* for spiritual Order and Government, whose jurisdiction was of like extent and latitude. In every Province there was a *Proconsul* or President, whose Seat was usually at the *Metropolis* or chief City of the Province ; and hither all inferior Cities came for judgment in matters of importance. And in proportion to this, there was in the same City an *Arch-bishop* or *Metropolitan* for matters of Ecclesiastical concernment. Lastly, in every *Diocess* the Emperours had their *Vicarii* or *Lieutenants*, who dwelt in the principal City of the *Diocess*, where all imperial *Edicts* were published, and from whence they were sent abroad into the several Provinces, and where was the chief *Tribunal*, where all Causes not determinable elsewhere, were decided. And to answer this, there was in the same City a *Primate*, to whom the last determination of all appeals from all the Provinces in differences of the *Clergie*, and the Sovereign care of all the *Diocess* for sundry points of spiritual Government did belong. This in short is the sum of the account which that
learned

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learned man gives of this matter. So that **Part I.**

the *Patriarch* as superior to the *Metropolitans*, was to have under his jurisdiction not any one single Province but a whole *Diocess* (in the old *Roman* notion of that word) consisting of many *Provinces*. To him belonged the ordination of all the *Metropolitans* that were under him, as also the summoning them to Councils, the *correcting* and reforming the misdemeanours they were guilty of, and from his judgment and sentence in things properly within his cognizance there lay no appeal. To this I shall only add what *Salmasius* has noted, that as the *Diocess* that was governed by the *Vicarius* had many *Provinces* under it, so the *Præfectus Prætorio* had several *Diocesses* under him: and in proportion to this probably it was, that *Patriarchs* were first brought in, who if not superior to *Primates* in jurisdiction and power, were yet in *honour* by reason of the dignity of those Cities where their *Sees* were fixed, as at *Rome*, *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, and *Jerusalem*, a title and dignity which they retain to this day.

De Primat
c. 12. p. 331.

The next Office to Bishops was that of **PRESBYTERS**, to whom it belonged to preach to the people, to administer

Q 3

baptism,

Part I. Baptism, consecrate the Eucharist, and to be assistant to the Bishop both in publick ministrations, and in dispatching the affairs of the Church. The truth is, the *Presbyters* of every great City were a kind of *Ecclesiastical Senate*, under the care and Presidency of the Bishop, whose counsel and assistance he made use of in ruling those Societies of Christians that were under his charge and government, and were accordingly reckoned next in place and power to him: thus described by S. Gregory in his *Iambics*;

Ἐἰς ἑαυ-
τὸν.

Corm. 23.

p. 244.

Tom. 2.

— οἱ τὰ δεύτερα
Θρόνων λελοχότες,
Λαὸν πρέσβηροι Πρεσβύται,
Σεμλὴ γερυσία.

The venerable Senate of Presbyters, that preside over the people, and possess the second Throne, i. e. the place next to the Bishop: they are called *Clerici superioris loci*, and otherwhiles (unless we understand it of the *Chorepiscopi*) *Antistites in secundo ordine*; and accordingly in Churches had seats of eminency placed for them next to the Bishops Throne. Whereby was implied (says Zonaras,) that they ought to use a proportionable care and providence

C. Theod.

Leg. 11.

Tit. 39.

desid

Test. lib. 10.

Sidon. A-

poll. lib. 4.

Epist. 11.

p. 96.

In Can. 58.

Apost.

providence towards the People, to in- Part 1.

form and teach them, to direct and guide them, being appointed as *Fellow-labourers* with, and *Assistants* to the Bishop.

But though Presbyters by their ordination had a *power* conferred upon them to administer holy things, yet after that the Church was settled upon foundations of order and regularity, they did not usually exercise this power within any *Diocese* without leave and authority from the *Bishop*, much less take upon them to Preach in his presence.

This custom (however it might be otherwise in the *Eastern Church*) we are sure was constantly observed in the Churches of *Africk* till the time of *Valerius*, S. *Augustine's* Predecessor in the See of *Hippo*:

Who being a *Greek*, and by reason of his little skill in the *Latin* tongue, unable to preach to the *edification* of the people, admitted S. *Augustine* (whom he had lately ordained *Presbyter*) to preach before him. Which though at first 'twas ill resented by some Bishops in those parts, yet quickly became a President for other Churches to follow after.

After these came *DEACONS*: What the duty of their place was, appears from their Primitive election, the Apostles

Possid. in vit. Aug. c. 5. col. 862. Tom. 1.

Part. I. setting them apart to *serve* or *minister* to the *Tables*, i.e. to attend upon and take charge of those daily *provisions* that were made for poor indigent Christians; but certainly it implies also their being destined to a peculiar attendance at the service of the *Lords Table*. And both these may be very well meant in that place, it being the custom of Christians then to meet every day at the *Lords Table*, where they made their offerings for the Poor, and when Poor and Rich had their meals together. And hence it was ever accounted part of the *Deacons* Office, as to take care of the Poor, and to distribute the monies given for their relief and maintenance, so to wait upon the celebration of the *Eucharist*, which being consecrated by the Bishop, or *Presbyter*, the *Deacon* delivered the Sacramental Elements to the people. Besides this, they were wont also to *preach* and to *baptize*, and were employed in many parts of the publick Service, especially in guiding and directing of the people. The number of them in any one place was usually restrained to *seven*, this being the number originally instituted by the *Apostle*, and which might not be altered, although the City was never

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never so great and numerous, as 'tis in Part I. the last *Canon* of the *Neocaesarean* Council. As the *Presbyters* were to the *Bishop*, so the *Deacons* were to the *Presbyters*, to be assistant to them, and to give them all due respect and reverence. And therefore when some of them began to take too much upon them, to distribute the Sacrament before the Bishop or Presbyter, and to take place amongst the Presbyters, the Council of *Nice* took notice of it as a piece of bold and saucy *Can. 18.* usurpation, severely commanded them to know their place, and to contain themselves within their own *bounds* and *measures*, and neither to meddle with the Sacrament but in their order, nor to sit down before the *Presbyters*, unless it be by their leave and command, as 'tis expressed by the *Laodicean* Synod. *Can. 20.* According to the first Council of *Arles* *Can. 18.* forbids the *Deacons* to do any thing of themselves, but to reserve the honour to the *Presbyters*. Out of the body of these *Deacons* there was usually one chosen to overlook the rest, the *Arch-Deacon*; an Office supposed to have been of good antiquity in the Church, and of great authority, especially in after times, being generally stiled the *Eye of the Bishop*,

Part I. *Bishop* to inspect all parts and places of his Diocess. This was he that in the Church of Rome was called the *Cardinal Deacon*, who (as *Onuphrius* tells us) was at first but one, though the number encreased afterwards. While Churches were little, and the services not many, the Deacons themselves were able to discharge them, but as these encreased so did their Labours, and therefore 'twas thought fit to take in some inferior Officers under them. This gave being to

*De Episc.
Tit. & Dia-
con. Car-
din. p. 24.*

SUBDEACONS, who were to be assistant to the *Deacon* as the *Deacon* to the *Presbyter*, and he to the *Bishop*. One great part of his work was, to wait at the *Church-doors* in the time of publick Worship to usher in and to bring out the several orders of the *Catechumens* and *Penitents*, that none might mistake their proper stations, and that no confusion or disorder might arise to the disturbance of the Congregation. When he was first taken in, I cannot find, but he is mentioned in an Epistle of the *Roman Clergie* to them of *Carthage* about *S. Cyprian's* retirement, and elsewhere very often in *Cyprian's* Epistles. Where he also speaks of the *ACOLYTHUS*; what his proper business was, is not so certain; by

*Conc. Laod.
dic. Can. 43.
ubi vid.
Zon. & Bal-
sam.*

*Inter Epist.
Cypr. Epist.
2. p. 8.
Epist. 28.
p. 41.*

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by some his Office is said to have been **Part I.** this, to *Follow* (as the word implies) or to go along with the Bishop in the quality of an *honourable* attendant, to be ready at hand to minister to him, and to be a companion and witness of his honest and unblameable conversation, in case any evil fame should arise, that might endeavour to blast his Reputation. But by others he is said to have been a *Taper-bearer*, to carry the *Lights* which were set up at reading of the *Gospel*. And this seems to be clear from the fourth Council of *Carthage*, where, at his *Can. 5.* ordination he is appointed to receive at the *Archdeacons* hand a *Candlestick* with a *Taper*, that he may know 'tis the duty of his place to light up the *Lights* in the *Church*. This might very well be in those times, but 'tis certain the Office of *Acolythus* was in use long before that custom of setting up Lights at the reading of the Gospel was brought into the Church. By *Cyprian* also is mentioned the Office of the *EXORCIST*, whose business was *Epist. 16. p. 29. & 146.* to attend the *Catechumens*, and the *Energumeni*, or such as were possessed of the Devil. For after the miraculous power of casting out Devils began to cease, or at least not to be so common as it was, these

Part I. these possessed Persons used to come to the *out-parts* of the Church, where a Person was appointed to *exorcise* them, *i.e.* to pray over them, with such prayers as were peculiarly composed for those occasions, and this he did in the publick name of the whole Church, the people also at the same time praying within; by which means the possessed person was delivered from the tyranny of the evil spirit; without any such *charms* and *conjurations*, and other *unchristian* forms and rites, which by degrees crept into this Office, and are at this day in use in the Church of *Rome*. Besides, to the *Exorcists* Office it belonged to instruct the *Catechumens*, and to train them up in the first principles of the Christian Faith: in which sense the *Exorcist* is by *Harmenopolus* explained by *Catechist*, and to *exorcise* (says *Balsamon*) is *καλεῖν ἀπίστους*, to instruct unbelievers.

Epist. Can.
ff. 1. Tit. 9.
Jur. Grac.
Rom. p. 16.
In Can. 26.
A Conc. Laod.

Next to the *Exorcist* was the *Lector*, or *READER* (mentioned frequently by *S. Cyprian*) whose business was to stand near the *Ambo* or *Pulpit*, and to read those portions of holy Scripture which were appointed to be read as principal parts of the Divine Service. This Office *Julian* (who was afterwards *Emperour*) when

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when a young Student at *Nicomedia* Part 1.
 took upon him, and became a Reader in
 that Church, which he did only to blind Socrat. H.
 Eccl. lib. 3.
 c. 1. p. 166.
 his Cousin *Constantius*, who began to
 suspect him as inclining to *Paganism*, to
 which he openly revolted afterwards,
 and became a bitter and virulent enemy
 to Christians, making an ill use of those
 Scriptures, which he had once *privately*
 studied and publickly read to the People.
 I know not whether it may be worth the
 while to take notice of the *Ostiarium* or
Door-keeper, answerable to the *Nethi-*
nims in the *Jewish* Church, who were
 to attend the Church Doors at times of
 publick meetings, to keep out notori-
 ous *Hereticks*, *Jews* and *Gentiles* from
 entering into the Christian Assemblies:
 it doubtless took its rise in the times of
 persecution, Christians then being forc'd
 to keep their meetings as private and
 clancular as they could, and to guard
 their Assemblies with all possible dili-
 gence, least some *Jew* or *Infidel* stealing
 in, should have gone and accused them
 before the Magistrate. What other Offi-
 cers there were (or whether any at all)
 in those times in and about the Church,
 will not be worth our labour to en-
 quire.

To

Part I. To these Offices they were set apart by solemn rites of *prayer* and *imposition of hands*; a ceremony (so far as χειροτονία is strictly taken for *lifting up the hand in suffrage*) commonly used at *Athens*, and some of the *States of Greece* in the designing and electing Persons to be publick Magistrates. But more particularly in use amongst the *Jews*, and from them doubtless (as many other of the *Synagogue-rites*) transferred into the *Christian Church*, and there constantly used both as to the *lifting up* and *laying on the hands*, as the right of conferring ordination upon the Ministers of *Christ*. Only it is here to be remembred, that there was a *double imposition* of hands, in setting a part Ecclesiastical Officers: the one was καθιέρωσις, or by way of *consecration*, and this was the proper way of ordaining the first rank of Officers, *Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons*: the other εὐλογία, by way of *blessing*, hands being laid upon them only as in the absolution of Penitents, by way of solemn *benediction*, and thus the inferior Officers, *Subdeacons, Readers, &c.* and *Deaconesses* were set apart: all orders under Bishops were ordained by the Bishop, the Bishop himself by all the Bishops of that *Province*,
who

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who used to meet together for that purpose, if nearness of place and other conveniencies would allow ; otherwise *three* Conc. Nicen. Can. 4. (and in case of necessity *two*) might do it ; the rest testifying their consent in writing, and the person thus ordained was to be confirmed by the *Metropolitan* of that Province. And whereas the Council of *Antioch* provides, that no Bishop shall be ordained without the *Metropolitan* being present, it is to be understood (as *Balsamon* tells us) of his leave and permission, or his appointing it to be so. For the ordination of the rest of the Clergy, *Priests, Deacons, &c.* the act and presence of one Bishop might suffice : and as no more than one was required, so one at least was necessary, the power of conferring order, being even by those who otherwise have had no mighty kindness for Episcopacy, acknowledged an unquestionable right of the Episcopal Office. Infomuch that in the case of *Athanasius*, it was a just exception against *Ischyas*, that he had been ordained by *Colythus*, who was no higher than a Presbyter, and consequently his ordination by the Council was adjudged null and void. Athanas. Apol. 2. de fug. sua. p. 570. Tom. 1.

At all ordinations, especially of superior

Part I. rior Officers, the *people* of the place were always present, and ratified the action with their approbation and consent. And indeed it cannot be denied but that the people in some places, especially, were very much considered in this affair, it being seldom or never done without their *presence* and *suffrage*. To this end the Bishop was wont before every ordination to *propound* and *publish* the names of those who were to have holy Orders conferred upon them, that so the people, who best knew their lives and conversations, might interpose if they had any thing material to object against it. By which means the *unworthy* were discovered and rejected, the *deserving* honoured and admitted, the ordination became legitimate and satisfactory, having past the common vote and suffrage, without any exception made against it, as *Cyprian* speaks. Hence the *Clergie* of what order soever were said *prædicari*, to to be *propounded* or published: And this way seemed so fit and reasonable, that *Severus* the *Emperour* (a wise and prudent Prince) in imitation of the *Christians*, established it in the disposal of Civil Offices. For when he had a mind to send out any Governours of Provinces,

or

*Vid. Constit. App.
lib. 8. c. 4.
p. 1004.
Cyprian. Epist.
68. p. 113.
114.*

*Lamprid.
in vit. A-
lex. Sev.
c. 45. p. 570.*

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or to appoint *Receivers* of his *Revenues*, Part 1. he propounded the Names of those, he intended, desiring the People to accept against the Persons, if they knew them guilty of any Crimes which they were able to make good against them: *affirming it to be unfit* (says his own *Historian*) *that when the Christians and Jews did it in publishing those who were to be ordained their Priests and Ministers, the same should not be observed in the Election of Governours of Provinces, who had the Lives and Fortunes of men committed to them.* When the Case so hapned that the Ordination was more remote or private, they were then required to bring sufficient *testimonials*. Thus *Cyprian*, when ordaining *Saturus* and *Optatus* to be *Readers*; We examined (says he) whether the *Testimonials* agreed to them, which they ought to have who are admitted into the Clergy.

And indeed they proceeded in this Affair with all imaginable Care and Prudence; they examined mens Fitness for the Place to which they were set apart, *Basil. ep. 181. p. 194. tom. 3.* enquired severely what had been the course and manner of their Life, how they had carried themselves in their Youth, and whether they had governed

R

it

Part I. it by the strict Rules of Piety. This Ancient Custom (as St. Basil calls it) was ratified by the *Nicene Council*, declaring that none should be ordained *Presbyter* without previous examination, especially a strict inquiry into his life and manners. For the *Apostolick Church* (says *Joseph the Ægyptian*, in his *Arabick Paraphrase* of that *Canon*) admits none in this case, but him that is of great innocency and unspotted life, free from those Crimes and Enormities which he there particularly reckons up. They suffered not men in those days to leap into Ecclesiastical Orders, but by the usual steps, and staying the appointed times. *Cyprian* commends *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, that he did not skip into the Chair, but passed through all the Ecclesiastical Offices, ascending through all the Degrees of Religion, till he came (*ad sacerdotii sublime fastigium*, to the top of the highest Order. A thing expressly provided for by the Synod of *Sardis*, that no man, though never so rich, though furnished with never so good a knack of speech and oratory, should yet be made Bishop before he had passed through the preceding Orders of *Reader*, *Subdeacon*, *Deacon*, and *Presbyter*; that having been found

Can. 9.

Ad Antonian. ep.
52. p. 67.

Can. 10.

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found fit in each of these, he might step Part 1.
 by step ascend up to the Episcopal Chair:
 and that he should spend some considerable
 time in each of these Degrees, that
 so his Faith, and the Innocency and
 Excellency of his Life, his Constancy
 and Moderation might be made known
 to all, and his fitness for that Sacred
 Function being made apparent, might
 procure him the greater Honour and
 Reverence from others. Men were then
 forced to stay their full time before they
 could be promoted to any higher Order;
 they did not commence *Divines* and
Bishops in a day, (αὐθήμερον ἄγιοι καὶ θεολογοί,
 as *Nazianzen* elegantly calls them) like
 some he complains of in his time, who
 were not polished by time and study,
 but fitted and made *Bishops* all at once;
 whom therefore he wittily compares
 to the *Dragons* teeth, which the Fable
 tells us, *Cadmus* sowed at *Thebes*, which
 immediately sprung up *Giants* out of
 the earth, arm'd *Cap-a-pee*, perfect *men*
 and perfect *Warriours* in one day: and
 just such (says he) were some Prelates
 consecrated, made wise and learned in
 one day, who yet understood nothing
 before, nor brought any thing to the
 Order, but only a good will to be there.

Orat. 1. de
 Theol. p.
 535. Or in
 laud. Bas.
 Or. 2. Cap.
 335.

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Part I. For the Age of the Persons that were to be ordained, they usually observed the *Apostolick Canon*, not to *chuse a Novice*, but of an Age competent to that Office that he was chosen to ; though it varied according to Times and Persons, and the occasions of the Church. For that of *Bishops*, I find not any certain Age positively set down. *Photius* in his *Nomo-Canon* speaks of an *Imperial Constitution*, that requires a Bishop not to be under thirty five : but the *Apostolical Constitutions* allow not a man to be made a Bishop under fifty years of Age, as having then passed all *Juvenile* Petulancies and Disorders. 'Tis certain, they were not generally (some extraordinary Instances alter not the case) promoted to that Office, till they were of a considerable Age, and thence frequently stiled *maiores natu* in the Writings of the Church. *Presbyters* were commonly made at thirty; yea, the Council of *Neocæsarea* decreed, that no man, though otherwise of never so unquestionable a Conversation, should be ordained *Presbyter* before that Age : the reason whereof they give, because *Christ* himself was not *baptized*, nor began to Preach till the thirtieth year of his age. The Council of *Agde* requires the

Τίτλ. ε.
κεφ. κη.
p.20.

Lib.2.c.1.
p.824.

Can.II.

Conc.Agde.
Can.17.

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the same Age, but assigns another reason, not before thirty years of Age, because then (say they) he comes to the Age of a *perfect Man*. *Deacons* were made at *twenty five*, and the like distance and proportion observed for the inferiour Officers under them. I take no notice in this place of *Monks*, *Hermits*, &c. partly because, although they were under a kind of *Ecclesiastical* relation, by reason of their more than ordinarily strict and severe Profession of Religion, yet were they not usually in *Holy Orders*; and partly because *Monachism* was of no very early standing in the Church, beginning probably about the times of the latter Persecutions; and even then too *Monks* were quite another thing, both in *profession*, *habit*, and *way of life*, from what they are at this day, as will abundantly appear to him that will take the pains to compare the account which *S. Hierom*, *Augustine*, *Palladius*, *Cassian*, and others give of those *Primitive Monks*, with the several *Orders* in the Church of *Rome* at this day.

I shall only add, that out of the *Monks* Persons were usually made choice of to be advanced into the *Clergie*, as is evident not only from multitudes of In-

Part I. stances in the Writers of the fourth and following Centuries, but from an express Law of the Emperour *Arcadius* to that purpose. The strictness of their Lives, and the Purity of their Manners, more immediately qualifying them for those holy Offices; insomuch that many times they were advanced into the Episcopal Chair, without going through the usual intermediate Orders of the Church.

*Cod.Theod.
L.16.tit.2.
de Episc.
C.1.32.*

To. I. p. 738. Several Instances whereof (*Serapion, Apollonius, Agatho, Aristo*, and some others) *Athanasius* reckons up in his Epistle to *Dracontius*, who being a Monk refused a Bishoprick to which he was chosen. But because we meet in the Ancient Writings of the Church, with very frequent mention of Persons of another Sex, *Deaconesses*, who were imployed in many Offices of Religion, it may not be amiss in this place to give some short account of them. Their Original was very early, and of equal standing with the Infancy of the Church; such was *Phebe* in the Church of *Cenebris*, mentioned by *St. Paul*, such were those two *Servant Maids* spoken of by *Pliny* in his Letters to the Emperour, whom he examined upon the Rack: such was the famous *Olympias* in the Church of *Constantinople*; not to men-

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mention any more particular Instances. Part I.
 They were either *Widows*, and then not
 to be taken into the Service of the
 Church under *threescore* years of age,
 according to S. Pauls Direction; or else
Virgins, who having been educated in
 order to it, and given testimony of a
 chaste and sober Conversation, were set
 apart at *forty*. What the proper place
 and ministry of these *Deaconesses* was
 in the ancient Church, though *Matthew* Syntagm.c.
11.lit.T.p.
71.
Epiph.Hæ-
res.79.p.
447.
Blastares seems to render a little doubt-
 ful, yet certainly it principally consisted in
 such Offices as these, to attend upon the
 Women at times of Publick Worship,
 especially in the Administration of Bap-
 tism, that when they were to be divest-
 ed in order to their *immersion*, they
 might overshadow them, so as nothing
 of Indecency and Uncomeliness might ap-
 pear; sometimes they were employed
 in *instructing* the more rude and igno-
 rant sort of Women in the plain and eas-
 ie Principles of *Christianity*, and in pre-
 paring them for *Baptism*; otherwhiles in
visiting and attending upon Women that
 were sick, in conveying Messages, Coun-
 sels, Consolations, Relief, (especially in
 times of Persecution, when it was dan-
 gerous for the *Officers* of the Church) to

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Part I. the *Martyrs* and them that were in Prison; and these Women no doubt it was that *Libanius* speaks of amongst the Christians, who were so very ready to be employed in these Offices of Humanity. But to return:

*Orat. de
vindicis, p.
55.*

Persons being thus set apart for Holy Offices, the Christians of those days discovered no less Piety in that mighty Respect and Reverence which they paid to them; that the Ministers of Religion should be peculiarly honoured and regarded, seems to have been accounted a piece of natural *Justice* by the common Sentiments of Mankind; the most Barbarous and Unpolished Nations that ever had a value for any thing of Religion, have always had a proportionable regard to them, to whom the care and administration of it did belong. *Julian* the Emperour expressly pleads for it as the most reasonable thing in the World, that *Priests* should be honoured, yea in some respects *above* Civil Magistrates, as being the Immediate Attendants and Domestick Servants of *God*, our *Intercessors* with Heaven, and the means of deriving down great Blessings from God upon us. But never was this clearer demonstrated than in the Practice of the Pri-

*Julian.
fragm. oper.
c. 1. p. 542.*

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Primitive Christians, who carried them- **Part 1.**
 selves towards their *Bishops* and *Mini-*
sters with all that kindness and Venera-
 tion which they were capable to express
 towards them. S. Paul bears record to
 the *Galatians*, that he was accounted so *Gal. 4. 15.*
 dear to them, that if the *plucking out*
their Eyes would have done him any
 good, they were ready to have done
 it for his sake, And S. Clemens testifies *Pag. 2.*
 of the *Corinthians* that they walked in
 the Laws of God, being subject to them
 that had the *Rule over them* ; yielding
 also due honour to the Seniors or Elder
 Persons that were amongst them. That
 by *ἡσούμφοι* in this place he should mean
Civil Magistrates, (as some have told us)
 I can hardly be persuaded, both because
 'tis the *same* word that's used by the Au-
 thor to the *Hebrews*, Obey, τοῖς ἡσούμοις ὑμῶν, *Heb. 13. 17.*
them that have the rule over you, and sub- *Hist. Eccl.*
mit your selves ; and (indeed both *Euse-* *L. 3. c. 38. p.*
bins and St. *Hierom* of old observed such *110. de*
 a mighty affinity in the *phrase* between *Script. Ec-*
 this and the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, as *cl. in Clem.*
 certainly to conclude St. Clemens to have
 been, if not the *Author*, at least the *Tran-*
slator of that Epistle ;) and also because
 the sole occasion of S. Clemens's writing
 this Epistle was a Mutiny which they
 had

Part I. had made against the *spiritual* Guides and Governours, and therefore, according to the right art of *Orators*, he first commends them for their eminent Subjection to them, that he might with the more advantage reprove and censure them for their Schism afterwards, which he does severely in the latter part of the Epistle, and towards the end of it exhorts those who had laid the foundation of the Sedition to become subject to their Presbyters; and being instructed to repentance, to bow the knees of their Hearts, to lay aside the Arrogant and Insolent boldness of their Tongues, and to learn to subject and submit themselves. The truth is, Bishops and Ministers were then looked upon as the common *Parents* of Christians, whom as such they honoured and obeyed, and to whom they repaired for counsel and direction in all important cases. 'Tis plain from several passages in *Tertullian*, that none could lawfully *marry* till they had first advised with the Bishop and Clergy of the Church, and had asked and obtained their leave, which probably they did to secure the person from marrying with a *Gentile*, or any of them that were without, and from the inconveniencies that

Vid. Constit. Apost.
l. 2. c. 33. p.
859.

De monagam. c. 11.
p. 531.
Ad Uxor.
l. 2. c. 2, 9.

Vid. de Coron. mil. c.
13. p. 139.

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that might ensue upon such a Match. No Part I. respect, no submission was thought great enough, whereby they might do Honour to them, they were wont to Kiss their Hands, to Embrace their Feet, and at their going from, or returning home, or indeed their coming unto any place, to wait upon them, and either to receive or dismiss them with the universal Confluence of the People. Happy they thought themselves if they could but Entertain them in their Houses, and Bless their Roofs with such welcome Guests. Amongst the various ways of Kindness which *Constantine* the Great shewed to the *Clergie*, the *Writer* of his Life tells us, that he used to Treat them at his own Table, though in the meanest and most despicable Habit; he never went a Journey, but he took some of them along with him, reckoning that thereby he made himself surer of the propitious and favourable Influence of the Divine Presence. What Honours he did them at the Council of *Nice*, where he refused to sit down, till they had given him intimation; with what Magnificent Gifts and Entertainments he treated them afterwards, the same Author relates at large. The truth is, the Piety of that

*Vid. Chrys.
de S. Melet.
Antioch.
hom. 45. to.
1. p. 526. &c
Annot. p. 91.*

*De vit.
Const. l. 1. c.
42. p. 429.*

Lib. 3.

de-

Part I. devout and excellent Prince thought nothing too good for those who were the Messengers of God, and Ministers of Holy things and so infinitely tender was he of their Honour, as to profess, that if at any time he should spy a Bishop overtaken in any immodest and uncomely action, he would cover him with his own *Imperial Robe*, rather than others should take notice of it, to the scandal of his Place and Person. And because their *Spiritual Authority* and Relation might not be sufficient to secure them from the Contempt of Rude and Profane Persons, therefore the first Christian Emperours invested them with power even in *Civil Cases*, as the way to beget them respect and authority amongst the People. Thus *Constantine* (as *Sozomen* tells us, and he sets it down as a great Argument of that Prince's Reverence for Religion) ordained, that Persons contending in Law, might if they pleased remove their Cause out of the *Civil Courts*, and appeal to the *Judgment* of the Bishops, whose Sentence should be *firm*, and take place before that of any other Judges, as if it had been immediately passed by the Emperour himself. And Cases thus judged by

Theod. Hist.
Eccl. l. 1. c.
11.

Hist. Eccl.
l. 1 c. 9.
p. 413.

Bi-

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Bishops, all Governours of Provinces and Part 1.
 their Officers were presently to put in-
 to execution; which was afterwards ra- C. Tit. 4. de
Episc. Au-
dient. ll. 7, 8.
 tified by two Laws, one of *Arcadius*,
 another of *Honorius* to that purpose.
 This power the Bishops sometimes dele-
 gated to their Inferiour Clergy, making
 them Judges in these Cases, as appears
 from what *Socrates* reports of *Sylvanus* Hi. Eccl.
l. 7. c. 37. p.
383.
 Bishop of *Troas*, that finding a male-admi-
 nistration of this power, he took it out
 of the hands of his *Clergie*, and devol-
 ved the hearing and determining Causes
 over to the *Laity*. And to name no more,
S. Augustine more than once and again Ep. 147.
col. 685.
vid. ep. Ne-
brid. ad
Aug. ep.
114. & a-
libi passim.
 tells us, how much he was crowded and
 even oppressed in deciding the Contests
 and Causes of Secular Persons. It seems
 they thought themselves happy in those
 days, if they could have their Causes heard
 and determined by *Bishops*.

A Pious Bishop and a Faithful Minister
 was in those days dearer to them than
 the most valuable Blessings upon Earth,
 and they could want any thing rather
 than be without them. When *Chrysostom* Chrys. Ep.
125. tom. 4.
p. 763.
 was driven by the *Empress* into Banish-
 ment, the People as he went along burst
 into Tears, and cried out, 'Twas better the
Sun should not shine, than that John Chry-
stom

Part I. *Isostom should not Preach.* And when, through the importunity of the People, he was recalled from his former Banishment, and diverted into the Suburbs till he might have an opportunity to make a Publick Vindication of his Innocency, the People not enduring such delays, the Emperour was forced to send for him into the City, the People universally meeting him, and conducting him to his Church, with all Expressions of Reverence and Veneration. Nay, while he was yet *Presbyter* of the Church of *Antioch*, so highly was he loved and honoured by the People of that place, that though he was chosen to the *See* of *Constantinople*, and sent for by the Emperours Letters, though their Bishop made an Oration on purpose to persuade them to it, yet would they by no means be brought to part with him; and when the Messengers by force attempted to bring him away, he was forced, to prevent a Tumult, to withdraw and hide himself, the People keeping a Guard about him, lest he should be taken from them: nor could the Emperour or his Agents with all their arts effect it, till he used this wile; he secretly wrote to the Governour of *Antioch*, who pre-
tending

*Socrat.
Hist. Eccl.
l. 5. c. 16. p.
324.*

*Metaphras.
in vit.
Chrys. apud
Surius ad
diem 27.*

Ch. 8. **Primitive Christianity.** 255

Part I.

tending to *Chrysostom*, that he had Concerns of moment to impart to him, invited him to a Private place without the City, where seizing upon him by Mules which he had in readiness, he conveyed him to *Constantinople*: where that his Welcome might be the more Magnificent, the Emperour commanded that all Persons of Eminency, both *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, should with all possible Pomp and state go *six miles* to meet him. Of *Nazianzen* (who sat in the same Chair of *Constantinople* before him) I find, that when he would have left that Bishoprick by reason of the stirs that were about it, and delivered himself up to Solitude and a Private Life, as a thing much more suitable to his Humour and *genius*, many of the People came about him, with tears besecching him not to forsake his Flock, which he had hitherto fed with so much Sweat and Labour. They could not then lose their Spiritual Guides, but they looked upon themselves as *Widows* and *Orphans*, resenting their Death with a general sorrow and lamentation, as if they had lost a *common Father*. *Nazianzen* reports, that when his Father (who was Bishop of but a little *Diocese*) lay very Sick, and all other Remedies proved

*Greg. Pres.
byt. de vit.
Greg. Naz.
præfix. oper.
Naz.*

*In laud.
patr. Gr.
19. p. 304.*

un-

Part I. unsuccessful, the People generally flock-
 ed to Church, and (though it was then
 the *joyful* time of *Easter*) broke out into
 mournful and passionate Complaints, and
 with the most earnest Prayers and Tears
 besought God for his Life. And of *Basil*
Bishop of Cæsarea, he tells us, that when
 he lay a dying the whole City came a-
 bout him, not able to bear his Depart-
 ure from them, praying as if they would
 have *laid hands* upon his Soul, and by
 force detained it in his Body ; they
 were (says he) even distracted with the
 thoughts of so great a Loss, nor was
 there any who would not have been wil-
 ling to have been deprived of *part* of his
 own Life, might it have added unto his.
 His Fúneral was solemnized with all pos-
 sible testimonies of Love and Honourable
 Attendance, and with the abundant Tears
 not only of *Christians*, but of *Jews* and
Heathens ; the Confluence so vast, that
 many were pressed to Death in the
 Crowd, and sent to bear him Company to
 his *long home*. And that we may see that
 their respect did not lye meerly in a
 few kind Words or external Protesta-
 tions, they made it good in more real
 and evident Demonstrations, by provid-
 ing *liberal maintenance* for them, part-
 ing

In laud.
Basil. Or.
 20. p. 371.

258 **Primitive Christianity.** Ch.8.

Part 1. Bishops, which priviledge was extended
Ib. Tit. 11. by *Honorius* to all the *Clergie*, that they
L. 1. should be tryed before their Bishops ;
before whom also he ordained, that all
causes properly belonging to Religion
should be brought, and be determined
by them ; and by another *constitution*,
Ib. lib. 2. that for the Veneration that is due to the
Tit 4. l. 7. Church, all Ecclesiastical causes should
be decided with all possible speed. And
to name no more, that the Persons of
Ministers might be secured from foreign
attempts, he and his Collegue *Arcadi-*
us made a Law, that whosoever did of-
fer any violence to them, should, upon
conviction or confessing of the Fact, be
punished with *death* ; and that the Mi-
nisters of Civil Justice should not stay
till the Bishop complained of the Injury
that was done, (it being probable that he
would rather encline to *Mercy* and *for-*
giveness) but that every one in this case
should be admitted and encouraged to
prefer and prosecute the charge : and in
case the rude multitude should by Arms
or otherwise obstruct Execution, and
that the Powers of that place could not
see it done, that then they should call
in the assistance of the Governour of the
Province, to see Justice put into execu-
tion.

Lib. 15. Tit.
2. l. 31.

Ch.8. Primitive Christianity 259

tion. And because next to his *Person* no- Part I.
 thing is so dear to a *Clergie-man* as his
Credit and *Reputation*, therefore the Em-
 perour *Honorius* took care by a Law, *Ibid. l. 41.*
 that whosoever (be he a person of the
 Highest Rank) should charge any *Clergie-*
man with Crimes which he was not able
 to make good, he himself should be pub-
 licly accounted vile and infamous, it
 being but just and equal (*says the Law*)
 that as guilt should be punished, and
 offenders reckoned as spots and ble-
 mishes to the Church, so that injured
 innocency should be righted and main-
 tained. How infinitely tender the first
 general Council of *Constantinople* was in
 this case, to secure the honour and good
 name of *Bishops* and *Clergie-men*, against
 the malicious insinuations and charges
 of false accusers, may appear by the
 large provision which they make about
 it in the *sixth Canon* of that Council; and
 because it sometimes so happens, that a
 mans enemies are those of his own house,
 therefore the *Apostolical Canons* ordain, *Can. 55, 56.*
 that if any Clergy-man reproach and de-
 fame a Bishop, he shall be deposed from
 his Ministry, for thou mayest not (*says*
the Canon) *speake evil of the Ruler of thy*
people; but if it be a *Presbyter* or *Deacon*,

Part 1. whom he thus reproaches, he shall be suspended from the Execution of his Office. So, sacred and venerable did they then account the Persons and Concernments of those who ministred in the Affairs of Divine Worship.

CHAP. IX.

Of their usual Worship, both private and publick.

The Christians worship of God in their Families discovered. Their usual times of prayer. Praying before and after meals. Singing of Psalms, and reading the Scriptures at the sametime. Frequency in prayer noted in divers instances. Their great reverence for the holy Scriptures, in reading, expounding, committing them to memory. Several instances of it. Their care in instructing their Families in Divine things. Singing of Psalms mixed with their usual labours. An account of their Publick Worship. The order of the Service in their Assemblies. Prayer : Reading the Scriptures: Two Lessons out of each Testament. Clements

mens his Epistle, and the Writings of Part I. other pious men read in the Church. Singing a part of the Publick Service. How ancient : What those Hymns were. The Sermon or discourse, upon what Subject usually. Such discourses called Tractatus, and why. More Sermons than one at the same time. Sermons preached in the afternoon as well as in the morning. The mighty concourse and confluence of people to these publick Solemnities. The departure of the Catechumens, Penitents, &c. The Missa Catechumenorum, what. The Missa Fidelium. The word missa or mass, whence, and how used in the Writers of those times. The singular reverence they shewed in these Duties. Great modesty and humility. Praying with hands lift up in the form of a Cross, why. They prayed either kneeling or standing. Sitting in prayer noted as a posture of great irreverence. Praying towards the East. The universality of this Custom. The reasons of it enquired into. Their reverence in hearing Gods Word. The people generally stood. Standing up at the Gospels. The remarkable piety and devotion of Constantine the Great. No departing the Congregation till the blessing was given.

Part I.

THUS far we have discovered the Piety of those ancient times, as to those necessary *Circumstances* that relate to the Worship of God, we are next to see wherein their *WORSHIP* it self did consist, which we shall consider both as *private* and *publick*, that which they performed at home, and that which was done in their Solemn and *Church-Assemblies*, only let it be remembred, that under the notion of Worship I here comprehend all those duties of *Piety* that refer to God: the duties of their *Private* worship were of two sorts, either such as were more Solemn and stated, and concerned the whole Family, or such as Persons discharged *alone*, or at least, did not tye up themselves to usual times: For the first, which are properly *Family duties*, they were usually performed in this order; at their first rising in the morning, they were wont to meet together, and to betake themselves to *Prayer* (as is plainly implied in *Chrysostoms* exhortation) to praise God for the protection and refreshment of the night, and to beg his grace and blessing for the following day: this was done by the *Master* of the house, unless some *Minister*

*Hom. 1. de
precat. tom.
1. p. 750.
vid. Basil.
Ep. ad
Greg. de
vit. solit.
tom. 3. p.
43. A.*

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Minister of Religion were present: 'tis Part I.
 probable that at this time they recited
 the *Creed*, or some confession of their
 Faith, by which they professed them-
 selves *Christians*, and as 'twere armed
 themselves against the Assaults of dangers
 and temptations; however, I question
 not, but that now they read some parts
 of *Scripture*, which they were most rea-
 dy to do at all times, and therefore cer-
 tainly would not omit it now. That
 they had their set *houres* for Prayer, the
third, *sixth*, and *ninth* hour, is plain,
 both from *Cyprian*, *Clem. Alexandrinus*, De Orat.
Dom.p.196.
Strom.lib.
7.p.722.
 and others: this they borrowed from
 the *Jews*, who divided the day into four
greater hours, the *first*, *third*, *sixth* and
ninth hour, three last whereof were
 stated hours of Prayer; the first hour
 began at six in the morning, and held
 till nine; the third from nine till twelve;
 and at this hour it was that the *Apostles*
 and *Christians* were met together, when
 the *Holy Ghost* descended upon them;
 the sixth hour was from twelve till three
 in the *afternoon*, and at this time *Peter*
went up to the house top to pray; the ninth
 was from three till six at night, and now
 it was that *Peter* and *John* went up to
 the Temple, *it being the ninth hour of*
 S 4 prayer;

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Part I. *prayer*; this division was observed by the *Christians* of succeeding times, though whether punctually kept to in their *Family devotions*, I am not able to affirm. About *noon*, before their going to dinner, some portions of *Scripture* were read, and the meat being set upon the *Table*, a *bleffing* was solemnly begged of God. as the fountain of all blessings, (and so religious herein was the good Emperor *Theodosius junior*, that he would never taste any meat, no not so much as a *Fig*, or any other *Fruit*, before he had first given thanks to the great *Sovereign Creator*) and both meat and drink set apart with the *sign* of the *Cross*, (a custom they used in the most common actions of life) as is expressly affirmed both by *Tertullian* and *Origen*, where he also gives a form of such *Prayers* as they were wont to use before meals, *viz.* that lifting up their eyes to Heaven, they prayed thus, *Thou that givest food to all flesh, grant that we may receive this food with thy blessing; thou Lord hast said, that if we drink any thing that is deadly, if we call upon thy name it shall not hurt us, thou therefore who art Lord of all power and glory, turn away all evil and malignant quality from our food, and*
what-

Clem. Alex.
strom. lib. 7.
p. 728.
Tert. Apol.
c. 39. p. 32.

Sozom.
præfat. ad.
Hist. Eccl.
p. 395.

De Cor.
mil. c. 3.
p. 102. lib.
2. in. Job.
fol. 36. col.
2. tom. 2.

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whatever pernicious influence it may have **Part I.**
upon us; when they were at dinner, they * *Ne sit vel
fung Hymns and Psalms**; a practice which *hora convi-
vii gratie
†Clem. Alexandrinus* commends as very *caelestis im-
munis, sonet
Psalms
convivium
sobrium
magis ca-
rissimos pas-
ces, si sit no-
bis spiritualis
auditis, pro-
lectet aures
religiosa
mulcedo.
Cyprian.
Epist.ad
Donatu
fine.
†Pasdag.
lib.2.c.4.p.
165.
|| In Psalm.
41.tom.3.
p.147.
suitable to Christians, as a modest and
decent way of praising God, while we
are partaking of his Creatures. || Chry-
stom greatly pleads for it, that men
should be careful to teach them their
Wives and Children, and which they
should use even at their ordinary works,
but especially at meals, such divine Songs
being an excellent antidote against temp-
tations; for (says he) as the Devil is
never more ready to ensnare us than at
meals, either by intemperance, ease, or
immoderate mirth, therefore both be-
fore and at meals we should fortifie our
selves with Psalms; nay, and when we
rise from the Table with our Wives and
Children, we should again sing Hymns
to God. They used also to have the
Scriptures read, and, as I have elsewhere
noted out of Nazianzen, every time they
took the Cup to drink, made the sign of
the Cross, and called upon Christ. Dinner
being ended, they concluded with prayer,
giving thanks to God for their present
refreshment, and begging his continued
provision of those good things which he
had*

*Cyprian.
Epist.ad
Donatu
fine.
†Pasdag.
lib.2.c.4.p.
165.
|| In Psalm.
41.tom.3.
p.147.
Cyprian.
Epist.
1.p.7.
Clem.Alex.
ut supra.
Basil.Ep.
ad Greg.
tom.3.p.46.*

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Part. I. had promised to them. So great a place had *Religion* in those days, even in mens common and natural actions, and so careful were they not to *starve* the Soul, while they were *feeding* of the Body: Much after the same rate they spent the rest of the day, till the night approached, when before their going to rest, the Family was again called to *prayer*, after which they went to bed; about *midnight* they were generally wont to rise to *pray* and to sing *Hymns* to God; this custom was very ancient, and doubtless took its original from the first times of Persecution, when not daring to meet together in the *day*, they were forced to keep their Religious Assemblies in the *night*; and though this was afterwards antiquated, as being found inconvenient for the generality of *Christians*, yet did it still continue in the *nocturnal* hours of *Monasteries* and religious *Orders*.

Clem. Alex.
pedag. lib.
2. c. 9. p.
185.

But besides these stated and ordinary devotions, performed by a joynt concurrence of the Family, the Christians of those days were careful to spend all the time they could, even when alone, in actions of Piety and Religion: they were most frequent in *prayer*; *Eusebius* reports of S. *James* the *just*, that he was wont every

Hist. Eccl.
lib. 2. c. 23.
p. 63. ex
Hegesippo.

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every day to go alone into the Church, Part I.
 and there *kneeling* upon the Pavement
 so long to pour out his Prayers to God,
 till his Knees became as *hard* and *brawny*
 as a *Camels*; the same which *Nazianzen*
 also tells us of his good Sister *Gorgonia*, *In laud.*
 that by often praying her Knees were be- *Gorgon.or.*
 come hard, and did as 'twere stick to *10.p.183.*
 the Ground. *Constantine* the Great though *De vit.*
 burdened with the cares of so vast an *Const.lib.4.*
 Empire, did yet every day at his wont- *c.22.*
 ed hours withdraw from all the company
 of the *Court*, retire into his *Closet*, and
 upon his knees offer up his Prayers to
 God; and to let the world know how *Ibid.c.15.*
 much he was devoted to this Duty, he *p.533.*
 caused his *Image* in all his Gold *Coins*,
 in his *Pictures* and *Statues*, to be repre-
 sented in the posture of a *Person* praying,
 with his hands spread abroad, and his
 eyes lift up to Heaven. Their next care
 was, diligently and seriously to read the
Scripture, to be mighty in the Divine
Oracles, as indeed they had an invalua-
 ble esteem of and reverence for the
 Word of God, as the Book which they *Epist.43.*
 infinitely prized beyond all others; up- *p.804.*
 on which account *Nazianzen* very se-
 verely chides his dear friend *Gregory*
Nyssen, that having laid aside the holy
 Scriptures,

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Part I. Scriptures (the most excellent Writings in the world) which he was wont to read both *privately* to himself, and *publickly* to the people, he had given up himself to the study of *foreign* and prophane Authors, desirous rather to be accounted an *Orator* than a *Christian*. St. *Augustine* tells us, that after his conversion, (how meanly soever he had before thought of them) the *Scriptures* were become the matter of his most *pure* and *chaste* delight, in respect whereof all other Books (even those of *Cicero* himself, which once he had so much doted on) became dry and unsavoury to him. In the study of this Book it was that Christians then mainly exercised themselves, as thinking they could never fully enough *understand* it, or deeply enough *imprint* it upon their hearts and memories. Of the younger *Theodosius*, they tell us, that rising early every morning, he, together with his Sisters, interchangeably sung *Psalms* of praise to God; the holy Scriptures he could exactly *repeat* in any part of them, and was wont to discourse out of them with the Bishops that were at *Court*, as readily as if he had been an old Bishop *himself*. We read of *Origen*, though then but a child, that

Vid. Confess. l. 3. c. 5. & l. 7. c. 20, 21.

Socrat. H. Eccl. lib. 7. c. 22. p. 361.

Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 2. p. 202.

that when his Father commanded him Part I.
 to commit some places of Scripture to *memory*, he most willingly set himself
 to it, and not content with the bare
 reading, he began to enquire into the
 more profound and recondite meaning
 of it, often asking his Father (to his no
 less joy than *admiration*) what the sense
 of this or that place of Scripture was;
 and this thirst after divine knowledge
 still continued and encreased in him all
 his life; St. *Hierom* reporting it out of a *Ep. ad
Marcell.
tom. I. p.
129.*
 Letter of one who was his great *compa-*
nion and benefactor, that he never went
 to *meals* without some part of Scripture
 read, never to *sleep*, till some about him
 had read them to him, and that both by
night and *day*, no sooner had he done
 praying but he betook himself to read-
 ing, and after reading returned again
 to prayer. *Valens*, Deacon of the Church
 of *Jerusalem*, a venerable old man, had *Euseb. de
Martyr.
Palest.
c. 11. p.
336.*
 so entirely given up himself to the study
 of the Scriptures, that it was all one to him
 to read, or to repeat whole pages toge-
 ther. The like we find of *John* an *Egyp-*
tian Confessor (whom *Eusebius* saw and *Ib. c. ult.
p. 334.*
 heard) that though both his eyes were
 put out, and his body mangled with
 unheard of cruelty, yet he was able at
 any

Part I. any time to repeat any places or passages either out of the *Old* or *New* Testament ; which when I first heard him do in the publick Congregation, I supposed him (*says he*) to have been reading in a Book, till coming near and finding how it was, I was struck with great admiration at it. Certainly Christians then had no mean esteem of, took no small delight in these sacred Volumes : for the sake of this Book (which he had chosen to be the *companion* and *counsellor* of his life) *Nazianzen* professes he had willingly undervalued and relinquished all other things ; this was the *Mine* where they enriched themselves with Divine Treasures, a Book where they furnished themselves with a true stock of knowledge ; as *St. Hierom* speaks of *Nepotian*, that by daily reading and meditation he had made his Soul a *Library* of Christ ; and he tells us of *Blesilla* a devout Widow, that though she was so far over-run with weakness and sickness, that her *Foot* would scarce bear her *Body*, or her *Neck* sustain the Burden of her *Head*, yet she was never found without a *Bible* in her *Hand*.

De pace.
Or. 12. p.
193.

Epitaph.
Nepot. nom.
1. p. 25.

Ep. ad
Paul. p.
157.

Nor did they covetously hoard up, and reserve this excellent knowledge
to

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to themselves, but freely communicated Part 1.
it to others, especially were careful to
Catechise and instruct their Children and
Servants in the Principles of Religion. *Pag. 3.*
St *Clemens* praises the *Corinthians*, that *Ib. p. 31.*
they took care to admonish their young
men to follow those things that were
modest and comely, and accordingly ex-
horts them to instruct the *younger* in the
knowledge of the Fear of God, to make
their Children partakers of the discipline
of Christ, to teach them how much hu-
mility and a chaste love do prevail with
God; that the fear of him is good, and
useful, and preserves all those who with
pure thoughts lead a holy life accord-
ing to his will. The *Historian* observes *De vit.*
of *Constantine*, that his first and greatest *Const. lib.*
care towards his *Sons* was, to secure the *4. c. 51.*
happiness of their *Souls*, by sowing the
seeds of Piety in their minds, which he
did partly himself, instructing them in
the knowledge of Divine things, and
partly by appointing such *Tutors* as were *Ib. c. 52.*
most approved for Religion: and when *p. 552.*
he had taken them into a partnership of
the Government, and either by private
Admonitions, or by Letters gave them
counsels for the steering themselves, this
was always the first and chief, that they
should

Part I. should prefer the knowledge and worship of *God*, the great *King* of the world, before all other advantages, yea, before the *Empire* it self. For this *Nazianzen* peculiarly commends his Mother, that not only she her self was *consecrated* to *God*, and brought up under a pious education, but that she conveyed it down as a necessary inheritance to her *Children*; and it seems her daughter *Gorgonia* was so well seasoned with these holy principles, that she religiously walked in the steps of so good a pattern, and did not only reclaim her *Husband*, but educated her *Children* and *Nephews* in the ways of Religion, giving them an excellent example while she *lived*, and leaving this as her last charge and request when she *died*. This was the *discipline* under which *Christians* were brought up in those times, Religion was instilled into them betimes, which grew up and mixed it self with their ordinary labours and recreations, insomuch that the most rude and illiterate Persons, instead of prophane, wanton *Songs*, which *vitiare* and corrupt the minds of men, τὰς αἰσχροῦς ᾠδὰς, as *Chrysostom* calls them, (*Songs of the Devils composition*) used nothing but *spiritual* and divine *Hymns*, so that

In Laud.
Cesaris, Or.
10. p. 161.

Id. Or. 11.
p. 180.

In Psalm.
117. rom.
31. 358.

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that (as St. *Hierom* relates of the place **Part 1.**
 where he lived) you could not go into *Epist. ad*
 the field, but you might hear the *Plow-* *Marcel. to:*
man at his *Hallelujahs*, the *Mower* at his *1. p.127.*
Hymns, and the *Vine-dresser* singing *Da-*
vid's Psalms.

Thus they carried themselves at home ;
 what they did in publick, in their *Church-*
Assemblies, on the Lord's Day especially,
 is next to be considered : the manner
 whereof I shall briefly represent, as it
 generally, and for the most part, obtain-
 ed in those Ages ; for it could not but
 vary something according to *time* and
place. And here I should save my self
 the trouble of any farther Search, by set-
 ting down the Account which *Justin*
Martyr and *Tertullian* give of their *pub-*
lick Worship, in their *Apologies* for the
 Christians : but that I am satisfied they
 did not design to give a perfect and pun-
 ctual Account of what was done at their
 Religious Assemblies, as might sufficient-
 ly appear from this one thing, that the
 first of them, in those places, speaks not
 any thing of their *Hymns* and *Psalms*,
 which yet, that they were (even in the
 Times wherein they lived) a constant
 part of the *Divine Service*, no man that
 is not wholly a stranger in Church-An-
 tiquity

Part I. *Antiquity can be ignorant of. I shall therefore, out of them and others, pick up and put together what seems to have constituted the main body of their Publick Duties, and represent them in that order wherein they were performed, which usually was in this manner: at their first coming together into the Congregation they began with Prayer, as Tertullian at least probably intimates, (for I do not find it in any besides him) we come together (says he) unto God, that being banded as twere into an Army, we may besiege him with our Prayers and Petitions; a violence which is very pleasing and grateful to him. I do not from hence positively conclude, that Prayer was the first Duty they began with, though it seems fairly to look that way; especially if Tertullian meant to represent the Order as well as the Substance of their Devotions. After this followed the reading of the Scriptures both of the old and new Testament, both the Commentaries of the Apostles, and the Writings of the Prophets, as Justin Martyr informs us. How much of each was read at one Meeting in the first times is not known, it being then unfixed and arbitrary; because their Meetings, by the*

fud-

*Apol. c. 39.
p. 31.*

Ap. 2. p. 98.

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sudden interruption of the Heathens, Part 1.
 were oft disturbed and broken up, and
 therefore both *Justin* and *Tertullian* con-
 fess, that they only read as much as occa-
 sion served, and the condition of the pre-
 sent times did require: but afterwards
 there were set portions assigned, both
 out of the old and new Testament, two
 Lessons out of each, as we find it in the
 Author of the *Apostolical Constitutions*. Lib. 2. c. 57.
 Nay, not onely the Canonical Scriptures, p. 875.
 but many of the Writings of *Apostolical*
 men, (such as were eminent for place and
 piety) were in those days publicly read
 in the Church; such was the famous E-
 pistle of St. *Clemens* to the *Corinthians*; Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. c. 23. p. 145.
 of which, and the Custom in like ca-
 ses, *Dionysius* Bishop of *Corinth*, who li-
 ved about the Year 172, gives *Soter* Bi-
 shop of *Rome* this account: To day (says
 he) we kept Holy the Lord's Day, where-
 in we read your Epistle, which we shall
 constantly read for our Instruction, as
 we also do the first Epistle which *Clemens*
 wrote to us. The like *Eusebius* re-
 ports of *Hermas* his Pastor (a Book
 so called) and *S. Hierom* of the Wri-
 tings of *S. Ephrem*, the famous Dea-
 con of *Edeffa*, that in some Churches
 they were publicly read after the read-
 ing

27 6 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 9.

Part I. ing of the Holy Scriptures. About this part of the Service it was that they sung *Hymns* and *Psalms*, a considerable part of the Divine Worship, (as it had ever been accounted both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*) and more immediately serviceable for celebrating the Honour of God, and lifting up the Minds of men to Divine and Heavenly Raptures. 'Twas in use in the very Infancy of the Christian Church, spoken of largely by *S. Paul*, and continued in all Ages after; inso-much that *Pliny* Reports it was the main part of the Christians Worship, *that they met together before day, to joyn in singing Hymns to Christ, as God.* These Hymns were either *extemporary* Raptures, so long as immediate *Inspiration* lasted; or *set* Compositions, either taken out of the Holy Scriptures, or of their own Composing, as *Tertullian* tells us. For it was usual then for any Persons to Compose Divine Songs, to the Honour of *Christ*, and to sing them in the Publick Assemblies; till the Council of *Laodicea* ordered, that no *Psalms* composed by *private* persons should be recited in the Church; (where though by the *ἰδιωτικὴ καλῶς*, the two *Greek Scholastic*s will have certain *Psalms* ascribed

Lib. 10. ep.
57.

Ap. c. 39. p.
32.
Eus. l. 5. c.
28. p. 196.

Can. 55.

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Part 1.

to Solomon and others to be understood, yet it's much more reasonable to understand it of *private compositions*, usual a long time in the Church, and here, for good reason prohibited.) By this Council it was likewise appointed that the Psalms should not be one entire continued Service, but that a *Lesson* should be interposed in the midst, after every Psalm; which was done (as *Balsamon* and *Alexius Aristenus* tells us) to take off the Weariness of the People, whose Minds might be apt to tire in passing through those prolix Offices all together, especially the Lessons being so large and many. In this Duty the whole Congregation bore a part, joyning all together in a common Celebration of the Praises of God; afterwards the Custom was to sing *alternatim*, course by course, answering one another; first brought in (as we are told) by *Flavianus* and *Diodorus* in the Church of *Antioch*, in the Reign of *Constantine*: but if we may believe *Socrates*, some hundreds of years before that by *Ignatius*, who was Bishop of that Church; who having in a *vision* heard the *Angels* praising the *Holy Trinity* with *alternate* Hymns, thereupon introduced the use of it in that Church, which from

Can. 17.

Theod. hist.
Ecc. l. 2. c.
24. p. 78.

Hist. Ecc.
l. 6. c. 8. p.
313.

Part I. thence spread it self into all other Churches; and whether *Pliny* (who lived about that time) might not mean some such thing by his *Secum invicem canere*, that the Christians sung Hymns one with another, or in their courses, may be considered by those who think it worth their labour to Inquire. In the mean time we proceed: *The Reader having done*, (they are the words of *Justin the Martyr*) the President of the Assembly makes a Sermon by way of Instruction and Exhortation, to the imitation and practice of those Excellent things that they had heard. And indeed Sermons, in those times, were nothing else but the Expositions of some part of the Scriptures which had been read before, and exhortations to the People to obey the Doctrines contained in them; and commonly were upon the Lesson which was last read, because that being freshest in the Peoples memory, was most proper to be treated of, as *St. Augustine* both avers the custom, and gives the reason. Hence, in the Writers of the Church, Preachers came to be called *Tractatores*, and their Sermons *Tractatus*, because they handled or treated of such places of Scripture as had been a little before read

*Loc. supra
cit.*

*Serm. 237.
de Temp.
rom. 10. col.
1116.*

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read unto the people. According as occasions was, these Sermons were more or fewer, sometimes two or three at the same Assembly, the Presbyters first and then the Bishop; as is expressly affirmed in the *Apostolical Constitutions*; Then (i.e. ut supra p. 875. after the reading of the Gospel) let the Presbyters exhort the people one by one, not all at once, and after all the Bishops, as it is fitting for the Master to do. And thus Gregory Nyssen excuses himself for not introducing his Sermons with a tedious Preface, because he would not be burdensom to the people, who had already taken pains to hear those admirable Discourses that had been made before him

This course they held not in the morning only, but likewise in the afternoon, (at sometimes at least) when they had their Publick Prayers and Sermons to the People. This *Chrysostom* assures us of, in an *Homily* upon this very subject, in commendation of those who came to Church after Dinner, and that as he tells them in greater Numbers than before; who instead of sleeping after Dinner came to hear the Divine Laws expounded unto them; instead of walking upon the Exchange, and entertain-

Εἰς τῆς
ἐκκλησίας
ἐξουσίας.
Tom. I. p.
872.

Ἐπειδὴ
τῶν μετὰ
τὴν ἐσθλασιν
ἀπρωτὶ καὶ
τῶν εἰς τὴν
ἀκρόασιν.
Hom. 10.
ad pop. An-
tioch. p.
116. tom. I.

Part I. ing themselves with idle and unprofitable Chat, came and stood amongst their Brethren, to converse with the Discourses of the *Prophets*. And this, he tells them, he puts them in mind of; not that it was a reproach to *eat* and *drink*, but that having done so, it was a shame to *stay at home*, and deprive themselves of those Religious Solemnities. The same 'twere easie to make good from several passages in *St. Basil*, *St. Augustine*, and others, who frequently refer to those Sermons which they had preached in the morning.

But how many soever the Discourses were, the people were ready enough to entertain them, flocking to them as to their Spiritual Meals and Banquets.

Ap. c. 39. *We meet together (says Tertullian) to hear the holy Scriptures rehearsed to us, that so (according to the quality of the times) we may be either fore-warned or corrected by them: for certainly with these holy words we nourish our Faith, erect our Hope, seal our Confidence; and, by these Inculcations are the better established in obedience to the Divine Commands.*

Orat. 32. *Nazianzen* tells us what vast Numbers used to meet in his Church at *Constantinople*, of all Sexes, of all sorts and

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and ranks of Persons, *rich* and *poor*, Part I.
honourable and *ignoble*, *learned* and *simple*,
Governours and *People*, *Souldiers* and
Tradesmen; all here unanimously con-
spiring together, and greedily desirous
to learn the knowledge of Divine things.
The like *Chrysostom* reports of the *Hom. 56. to.*
Church of *Antioch*, that they would set *1 p. 623.*
aside all Affairs at home, to come and
hear Sermons at Church; he tells them,
'twas the great *honour* of the City, not
so much that it had large *Suburbs* and
vast *numbers* of People, or brave *houses*
with gilded Dining-rooms, as that it
had a *diligent* and *attentive* People. And *Hom. 4. in*
elsewhere, that 'twas the great Encou- *verb. Esai. &*
ragement of his Ministry, to see such a *vid. Dom.*
famous and chearful Concourse, a Peo- *Exc. tom. 3.*
ple so well ordered and desirous to *p. 750.*
hear: that 'twas this advanced their Ci-
ty above the Honour of a *Senate*, or the
Office of a *Consul*, or the variety of *Sta-*
tues or Ornaments, or the Plenty of its
Merchandise, or the Commodiousness of
its *situation*; in that its People were so
earnest to hear and learn, its Churches
so thronged and crowded, and all Per-
sons inflamed with such an insatiable de-
fire of the Word that was preached to
them; yea, that this it was that adorned
the

Part I. the City, even above *Rome* it self. And indeed the Commendation is the greater, in that Commonness did not breed Contempt, it being usual in that Church (as *Chrysostom* often intimates) for a good part of the Year to have Sermons every day.

Constit. A.
post. l. 8. c.
6. p. 1006.

Well, Sermon being ended, Prayers were made with and for the *Catechumens*, *Penitents*, *Possessed*, and the like, according to their respective Capacities and Qualifications; the persons that were in every Rank departing as soon as the Prayer that particularly concerned them was done; first the *Catechumens*, and then the *Penitents*, as is prescribed in the nineteenth Canon of the *Laodicean Council*: For no sooner was the Service thus far performed, but all that were under Baptism, or under the Discipline of Penance, i.e. all that might not communicate at the *Lord's Table*, were commanded to depart, the *Deacon* crying aloud, Ο ΣΟΙ ΚΑΤΗΧΟΥΜΕΝΟΙ ΠΡΟΕΛΘΕΤΕ, *Those that are Catechumens go out*; in the *Latine Church* the form was, *ITE, MISSA EST*; Depart, there is a Dismission of you: *missa* being the same with *missio*, as *remissa* oft used in some Writers, for *remissio*, (and so the word *missa* is used by

by *Cassian* even in his time, for the dis-^{De Instit.}
mission of the Congregation.) Hence it ^{Monach.}
was that the whole Service, from the be-^{l. 3. c. 7.}
ginning of it till the time that the Hear-^{p. 26.}
ers were *dismissed*, came to be called
Missa Catechumenorum, the *Mass*, or Ser-
vice of the *Catechumens*; as that which
was performed afterwards at the Ce-
lebration of the *Eucharist* was called
Missa Fidelium, the *Mass*, or Service of
the *Faithful*; because none but they were
present at it: and in these Notions, and
no other, the Word is often to be met
with in *Tertullian*, and other Ancient
Writers of the Church. 'Tis true, that in
process of Time, as the Discipline of
the *Catechumens* wore out, so that Title
which belonged to the first part of the
Service was forgotten, and the Name
Missa was appropriated to the Service of
the *Lord's Supper*; and accordingly was
made use of by the Church of *Rome*, to
denote that which they peculiarly call
the *Mass*, or the *Propitiatory* Sacrifice of
the *Altar*, at this day. And the more
plausibly to impose this Delusion upon
the People, they do, with a great deal of
Confidence, muster up all those places of
the Fathers where the word *missa* is to
be found, and apply it to their *Mass*;
though

Part I. though it would puzzle them to produce but one place, where the Word is used in the same sense as they use it now, out of any genuine and approved Writer of the Church, for at least the first four hundred Years. But to return : The *Catechumens*, &c. being departed, and the Church Doors shut, they proceeded to the *Lord's Supper*, at which the *Faithful* onely might be present, wherein they prayed for all states and Ranks of men, gave the *Kiss* of Charity, prayed for *consecration* of the Eucharist, then received the Sacramental Elements, made their Offerings, and such like ; of which I do not now speak particularly, because I intend to treat distinctly of the *Sacraments* afterwards. For the same reason I say nothing concerning their *Admonitions*, *Church-censures*, *Absolutions*, &c. because these will come under consideration in another place : as also, because though managed at their Publick Assemblies, were yet only accidental to them, and no settled parts of the Divine Service. This, in short, was the general Form of Publick Worship in those ancient times ; which, although it might vary somewhat according to *times* and *places*, did yet for the main and the substance of it, hold in all.

That

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That which remains, is, a little to re- Part 1.

marque how the *Christians* carried themselves in the discharge of these Solemn Duties, which certainly was with singular *reverence* and *devotion*, such *gestures* and *actions*, as they conceived might express the greatest *piety* and *humility*. Let both Men and Women (says *Clemens of Alexandria*) come to Church in comely Padag. l. 3. c. 11. p. 255. Apparel, with a grave Pace, with a modest *silence*, with a *love* unfeigned, *chaste* both in Body and Mind, and so as they may be fit to put up Prayers to God. Let our *speech* in Prayer (says *Cyprian*) De Orat. Dom. p. 188. be under Discipline, observing a *decorous* Calmness and Modesty : we are to remember that we are under the Eye of God, whom we are not to offend either in the *habit* of our Body, or the *manner* of our Speech ; for, as 'tis the fashion of those that are impudent to clamour and make a noise ; so on the contrary, it becomes a sober man to pray with a *modest* Voice. When therefore we come together with our Brethren into the Assembly, to celebrate the Divine *Sacrifices* with the Minister of God, we ought to be mindful of *order*, and a reverent Regard, and not to throw about our Prayers with a *wild* and *confused* Voice,

OR

Part I. or with a disorderly prattling, to cast forth those Petitions which ought with the greatest modesty to be put up to God. The Men prayed with their *heads bare*, as not ashamed to look up to Heaven for what they begged of God ; the Women *covered*, as a sign of the *modesty* of that Sex ; and therefore *Tertullian* severely checks the practice of some Women in his time, who in time of Worship had no Covering on their Heads, or what was as good as none : What Reproof (says he) do they deserve, that continue *unveiled* in singing Psalms, or in any mention of God ? Or do they think it's enough to lay some thin and slight thing over their Heads in Prayer, and then think themselves covered ? Where he manifestly refers to those Rules which the *Apostle* prescribes in this case ; and concludes at last, that they should, at all times and in all places, be mindful of the Rule, being ready and provided against all mention of the Name of God ; who if he be in Womens *hearts*, will be known on their *heads*, viz. by a modest *carriage* and *covering* of them in their Addresses to him. Their Hands they did not onely lift up to Heaven, (a Posture in Prayer common both among
Jews

*De Virg.
veland.
p. 504.*

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Jews and Gentiles) but they did *expand* Part I.

and spread them abroad, that so by this means they might shadow out an *Image of the Cross*, or rather a Resemblance of him that hung upon it, as *Tertullian*, more than once and again informs us.

De Orat.
c. 11. *Apol.*
c. 39.

Prayer (says another) is a *Conversing* with God, and the Way to Heaven; and to stretch out our Hands is to form the Resemblance of *Christ crucified*, which

Asterius
Amasen.
Hom. de
peccat. apud
Phor. Cod.
271. col.
1496.

whoever prays should do, not onely as to the form and figure, but in reality and affection; for as he that is fastned to the Cross surely dies; so he that prays should *crucifie* the Desires of the Flesh, and every Inordinate Lust and Passion. In the performing of this Duty they either *kneeled* (which was most usual) or *stood*, which they always did upon the *Lord's Day*, for a reason which we have spoken of before; *sitting* was ever held a posture of great rudeness and irreverence.

Nay *Tertullian* falls heavy upon some that used presently to clap themselves down upon their Seats, as soon as ever Prayer was done, and down-right charges it as against Scripture: If it be an irreverent thing (as he argues) to sit down before, or over against a Person for whom thou hast a mighty Reverence and Veneration,

De Orat.
c. 12 p. 134.

how

Part I. how much more does it favour of *irreligion* to do so in the presence of the *living God*, while the *Angel* is yet standing by thee to carry up the Prayer to Heaven? Unless we have a mind to *reproach* God to his face, and tell him that we are weary of the duty.

Another Custom which they had in Prayer was, that they constantly prayed towards the *East*. This was so universally common, that there's scarce any Ancient Ecclesiastical Writer but speaks of it; though not many of them agree in assigning the Reason of it. The Custom doubtless begun very early, and is generally ascribed to the *Apostles*; so the Author of the *Questions and Answers* assures us, and tells us it was because the *East* was accounted the most *excellent* part of the Creation; and seeing in Prayer we must turn our faces towards some Quarter, 'twas fittest it should be towards the *East*. Just (says he) as in making the Sign of the *Cross* in the Name of *Christ*, we use the Right hand, because 'tis better than the left, not in its own nature, but only in its *positure* and *fitness* for our use. St. *Basil* likewise reckons it amongst the *traditions* that had been derived from the *Apostles*, but tells us
the

Quest. 118.
p. 471.

De Spir. S.
c. 27. *p.* 352.
to. 2. *Atthanas.*
ad Antioch. quest.
37. p. 285.
tom. 2.
Const. App.
l. 2. *c.* 57. *p.*
875.

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the *mystery* of it was, that hereby they Part I.
 respected *Paradise*, which God planted
 in the *East*, begging of him that they
 might be restored to that Ancient Coun-
 try from whence they had been cast out.
 This might probably be with those who
 dwelt in the *Western* Parts of the World,
 but how it could be done by those who
 lived *East* of the Garden of *Eden*, (sup-
 pose in any parts of *India*) I am not a-
 ble to imagine. *Clemens Alex.* tells us, *Strom. l. 7. p. 724.*
 that herein they had respect to *Christ*;
 for as the *East* is the birth and womb of
 the Natural Day, from whence the *Sun*
 (the Fountain of all sensible Light) does
 arise and spring; so *Christ* the true *Sun*
 of *Righteousness*, who arose upon the
 World with the *light* of Truth, when it
 sat in the *darkness* of Error and Igno-
 rance, is in Scripture styled the *East*, and
 therefore our Prayers are directed thi-
 ther. For which reason *Tertullian* calls *Contra Val-
lent. c. 3. p. 251.*
 the *East* the *figure*, or the *type* of *Christ*.
 But whatever the true Reason was, I'm
 sure 'tis a sober account which *Athana-*
sius gives of it: *We do not* (says he) *Ubi sup. p. 284.*
worship towards the East, as if we thought
God any ways shut up in those Parts
of the World, but because God is in
himself, and is so styled in Scripture,
V
the

Part I. *the true light ; in turning therefore towards that created light we do not worship it, but the great Creator of it ; taking occasion from that most excellent Element to adore that God who was before all Elements and Ages of the World.* This was their carriage for Prayer ; nor were they less humble and reverent in other parts of Worship ; they heard the Scriptures read and preached with all possible gravity and attention ; which that they might the better do, they were wont to stand all the while the Sermon continued, none sitting then but the Bishop and Presbyters that were about him. So *Optatus* expressly tells us, that the People had no privilege to sit down in the Church ; though whether the Custom was universally so in all places, I much doubt. Nay, *St. Augustine* tells us, that in some *transmarine* (I suppose he means the *Western*) Churches it was otherwise, the people having seats placed for them as well as the *Ministers*. But generally the people stood, partly to express the greater reverence, partly to keep their Attentions awake and lively. Hence it was part of the *Deacons* Office (as *Chrysostom* tells us, and the same we find in the ancient *Greek Liturgies*) to call upon the

De Schifsn.
Donat. l. 4.
p. 115.

De Catech.
rudib. c. 13
tom. 4. col.
907.

De incom-
parab. Dei
natur. hom.
4. p. 353.
tom. 1.

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the people with an ὀρθοὶ στῶμεν καλῶς. Part I.

Let us duely stand upright, respecting the decent posture of their bodies, though withall principally intending the elevation of their minds, the lifting up their thoughts from low sordid Objects, to those Spiritual and Divine things, they were then conversant about. But whatever they did in other parts of the Publick Service, they constantly stood up at the reading of the Gospel; a Custom generally embraced in all parts of the Christian World. Therefore *Sozomen*, *Hist. Eccl.* l. 7. c. 19. p. 734. discoursing of the various Rites observed in several Churches, notes it as an unusual thing in the Bishop of *Alexandria*, that he did not rise up when the Gospels were read; a thing (says he) which I never saw nor heard of in any other place. And *Philostorgius* tells us, *Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. num. 5. p. 29. of *Theophilus* the *Indian* Bishop, that amongst several irregularities which he corrected in those Churches, he particularly reformed this, that the people were wont to sit while the Lessons out of the Gospel were read to them. Nor did the greatest Personages think themselves too high to express this piece of Reverence in their Attendance upon the King of Kings. 'Tis very memorable what

Part 1. what we read concerning the great *Constantine*, that when upon occasion *Eusebius* was to make a *Panegyrick* concerning the *Sepulchre* of our Saviour, though it was not in the *Church*, but in the *Palace*, yet he refused to sit all the time; and when *Eusebius* beseeched him to sit down in his *Throne*, that was hard by him, he would not, but attentively heard, judged, and approved those things that were spoken. And when after a good while, the *Sermon* having been prolix, *Eusebius* out of compliance would have broken off and done, he called to him to go on till he came to the full end of his *Discourse*; whereupon he was again solicited to sit down; but refused, *affirming it to be unfit to attend upon any Discourse concerning God, and much more at this time, with ease and softness: and that it was very consonant to Piety and Religion, that Discourses about Divine things should be heard standing.* So great a Reverence had that excellent Prince for the Solemnities of Divine Worship. In the discharge of these Holy Exercises, as they carried themselves with all Seriousness and Gravity, so they continued in them till they were completely finished; there was then no such

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such Airiness and Levity as now possesses Part 1.
the Minds of men, no *snatching* at some
pieces of the Worship, *tanquam Canis ad*
Nilum, and gone again, no rude Disorderly
departing the Congregation, till
the whole Worship and Service of God
was over. And therefore when this
warmth and vigour of the first Ages was
a little abated, the Council of Orleans
thought good to re-establish the Primi-
tive Devotion by this Canon, *That when* Can. 28
the people came together for the Celebration
of Divine Service, they should not depart
till the whole Solemnity was over, and
the Bishop or Presbyter had given the Blessing.

CHAP. X.

Of Baptism, and the Administration of it in the Primitive Church.

Four Circumstances considered. Baptism, by whom administred. By none usually without the leave of the Bishop. The great Controversie about Re-baptizing those that had been baptized by Hereticks. An Account of it out of Cyprian. Lay-men how suffered to baptize. The Opinion of the Absolute Necessity of Baptism. The Case of Athanasius, his baptizing when but a Child. Women never permitted to baptize. Persons to be baptized, who. Infants. Sufficient Evidence for Infant Baptism in the Ancient Writers of the Church. Some passages out of Cyprian noted. The baptized most-what Adult persons. The stated times of Baptism, Easter and Whitsuntide, and why. Especially upon Easter Eve, and why. In cases of Necessity at any other time. Clinici who. Clinic Baptism accounted less perfect, why. Usual to defer Baptism till a Death-bed, and the reason of it noted

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*in Constantine and others. Being bapt- Part 1.
tized for the dead, what (probably.) The
usual place of Baptism in or near the
Church; always before the Congregati-
on. The Baptisterium or Font, where it
stood, and how large. Its distinct Apart-
ments for Men and Women. A curiosity
in many of those times of being baptized
in Jordan, and why. The manner of the
Administration. The person baptized look-
ed towards the West, and why. Their
Answering as to their Profession of their
Faith. Their solemn Abrenuntiation made
twice, and the form of it. Surcises in
Baptism. Persons baptized Exorcised;
what meant by it. Unction, upon what
account used; several reasons of it as-
signed by the Fathers. The Sign of the
Cross made in Baptism evident out of
the Ancient Fathers. Of Immersion or
putting the person under water; what it
shadowed out. Generally in use in those
Countries: not absolutely necessary in o-
thers. Trine Immersion: different Rea-
sons of it assigned by the Fathers. It
obtained not in Spain, and why. A se-
cond Unction. Persons after Baptism
clothed in White Garments, and why.
These kept in the Church as a testimony
of their Solemn Engagement. A memo-*

Part 1. *able Instance out of Victor Uticensis. A brief account of Confirmation. The neglect of it bewailed.*

OUR Lord having instituted BAPTISM and the LORD'S SUPPER, as the two great *Sacraments* of the *Christian Law*, they have accordingly been ever accounted Principal parts of Publick Worship in the Christian Church; we shall treat first of *Baptism*, as being the *door* by which persons enter in, the great and Solemn Rite of our Initiation into the Faith of Christ; concerning which, four Circumstances are chiefly to be inquired into; the *persons* by and upon whom; the *time* when, the *place* where, the *manner* how this Sacrament was administred in the ancient Church.

For the *Persons* by whom this Sacrament was administred, they were the *Ministers of the Gospel*, the *Stewards of the Mysteries of Christ*, baptizing and preaching the Gospel, being joyned together by our Saviour in the same Commission; usually 'twas done by the Bishop, (the *πρεσβυτερος* in *J. Martyr*, the *Antistes* in *Tertullian*, the *President* or chief Minister of the Congregation, the *Summus Sacerdos*, *qui est Episcopus*, as he calls him,

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him, without whose leave and Authority neither *Presbyters* nor *Deacons* might take upon them to baptize, as not onely *Ignatius* but *Tertullian* expressly tells us, and if they did, it was onely in case of necessity, as is affirmed by an ancient Author, who lived in or near the time of *Cyprian*. The same *S. Hierom* assures us was the Custom in his time, though otherwhiles we find the Bishop to begin the action, and the *Presbyters* to carry it on and finish it. But as Christianity increased, this became a more familiar part of the *Presbyters* and the *Deacons* Office, and doubtless had been more or less executed by them from the beginning, though out of Reverence to the Bishop, and to preserve the honour of the Church, (as *Tertullian* gives the reason) they did it not without his leave and deputation; and 'tis certain that *Philip* baptized the *Eunuch*, who yet was of no higher Order than that of *Deacon*. Nor was it accounted enough by some in those times, that Baptism was conferred by a Person called to the Ministry, unless he was also *orthodox* in the Faith. This became matter of great bustle in the Church: hence sprang that famous Controversie between *Cyprian* and

Part 1.
Epist. ad
Smyrneos,
p. 5.
De Bapt. c.
17. p. 230.
De non re-
bapt. apud
Cypr. p. 138.
Dial. adv.
Lucifer. p.
139.
Ambr. de
Sacram. l.
5. c. 1.

Part I. and *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*, concerning the *re-baptizing* those that had been baptized by *Hereticks*, (of which there is so much in *Cyprians* Writings) *Cyprian* asserting that they ought to be re-baptized, the other as stiffly maintaining it to be both against the *doctrine* and *practice* of the Church. This begot great Heats and Feuds between those good men, and engaged a great part of the whole Christian Church in the quarrel, *Cyprian* endeavouring to strengthen his Cause, not only by Arguments from Scripture, but by calling a Council at *Carthage* of eighty seven *African Bishops*, who all concluded for his opinion. How truly *Cyprian* maintained this, I am not concerned to inquire; only I take notice of two things which he and his Followers pleaded by way of Abatement to the rigour of their Opinion. First, that hereby they did not assert *re-baptization* to be lawful, this they expressly deny to receive any Patronage from their practice, for they looked upon that Baptism that had been conferred by Hereticks as *null* and *invalid*, (seeing Hereticks being out of the Church could not give what they *had* not) and therefore when any returned to the Union of the Church,

*Cypr. ep. ad
Quint. de
Heret. bap.
ep. 71. p.
119. et
Conc. Carth.
apud Cypr.
sent. 35. p.
286.*

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Church they could not properly be said Part I.
to be re-baptized, seeing they did but
receive what (*lawfully*) they had not be-
fore. Secondly, that they did not pro-
miscuously baptize all that came over
from Heretical Churches, for where any
had been lawfully baptized by *Orthodox*
Ministers before their going over to
them, these they received at their re-
turn without any other Ceremony than
Imposition of Hands, baptizing those only
who never had any other Baptism than
that which Hereticks had conferred up-
on them. *Cyprian* being thus severe a-
gainst Baptism dispensed by *Heretical* Mi-
nisters, we may wonder what he thought
of that which was administred by meer
Lay unordained Persons, which yet was
not uncommon in those times; for that
Lay-men (provided they were Christi-
ans and baptized themselves) might and
did baptize others in cases of necessity,
is so positively asserted by *Tertullian*,
Hierom, and others, that no man can
doubt of it. A custom ratified by the
Fathers of the *Illiberine* Council, with
this *Proviso*, that if the Persons so bap-
tized lived, they should receive *confir-
mation* from the Bishop. This without
question arose from an Opinion they had
of

*Cypr. ib. &
Conc. Carth.
Sess. 8. &
Cyril. pref.
Catech. ad
Illum. p. 9.*

*Locis antea
citat.*

Can. 38.

Part 1. of the absolute and indispenfible *necessity* of Baptism, without which they scarce thought a mans future Condition could be safe, and that therefore 'twas better it should be had from any, than to depart this Life without it; for excepting the Case of *Martyrs*, (whom they thought sufficiently qualified for Heaven by being *baptized* in their own *bloud*, insisting upon a two-fold Baptism, one of *water* in time of Peace, another of *bloud* in the time of Persecution, answerable to the *water* and *bloud* that flowed out of our *Saviours* side: excepting these) they reckoned no man could be saved without being baptized, and cared not much in cases of necessity, so they had it, how they came by it. (As for the Act of *Athanasius* (mentioned by the Author of his Life in *Photius*, and more largely related by *Sozomen*) when a Boy playing with the rest of his Companions, they formed themselves into a kind of Church-society, *Athanasius* was chosen Bishop, and others personated the *Catechumens* ready to be baptized, and were accordingly with all the usual Formalities baptized by *Athanasius*. This Juvenile Ceremony being ended, they were brought before *Alexander* the then Bishop

*Cyrl. ad
Illum. ca-
tech. 3. p. 61.*

*Cod. 258.
col. 1429.*

*Hist. Eccl.
l. 2. c. 17. p.
467.*

shop of *Alexandria*, (who had himself Part I.
 beheld the whole *scene*) who inquiring
 into the Reasons and Circumstances of the
 action, and having consulted with his
 Clergy that were about him, concluded
 that those Children ought not to be re-
baptized, and therefore onely added his
 Confirmation to them. But this being
 onely a particular Case, and the like not
 mentioned that I remember by any Wri-
 ter of those times, I only relate it as I
 find it.) But though this Power in Cases
 of necessity was allowed to *men*, (who
 were capable of having the Ministerial
 Office conferred upon them) yet was it
 ever denied to *Women*, whom the Apo-
 stle has so expresly forbidden to exer-
 cise any Ministry *in the Church of God*,
 and accordingly censured in the *Aposto-*
lical Constitutions, to be not onely *dange-*
rous, but *unlawful* and *impious*. Indeed Tert. de
Bapt. c. 17.
De vel.
virg. c. 9.
De praescr.
adv. haeret.
c. 41.
Epiph. haer.
49. & haer.
79.
 in the Churches of the Hereticks, Women
 even in those times took upon them to
 baptize, but it was universally condem-
 ned and cried out against by the
 Orthodox, and constantly affixed as a
 note of Dishonour and Reproach upon
 the Heretical Parties of those times, as
 abundantly appears from *Tertullian*, *Epi-*
phanius, and others, who record the
 He-

Part I. Heretical Doctrines and Practises of those first Ages of the Church ; however afterwards it crept in in some places, and is allowed and practised in the Church of *Rome* at this day : where, in cases of necessity, they give leave that it may be administred by any, and in any Language, whether the Person administring be a *Clergie* or a *Lay-man*, (yea though under *Excommunication*) whether he be a *Believer* or an *Infidel*, a *Catholick* or an *Heretick*, a *Man* or a *Woman* ; only taking care that (if it may be) a *Priest* be preferred before a *Deacon*, a *Deacon* before a *Subdeacon*, a *Clergie-man* before a *Laic*, and a *Man* before a *Woman* ; together with some other cases, which are there wisely provided for.

*Ritu. Rom.
de Sacram.
Baptism.
Rubric. de
ministr.
Bapt. p. 9.*

From the Persons *ministring* we proceed to the Persons upon whom it was *conferred*, and they were of two sorts, *Infants* and *Adult* Persons. How far the Baptizing of *Infants* is included in our *Saviours* Institution, is not my work to dispute ; but certainly, if in Controverted Cases the constant practice of the Church, and those who immediately succeeded the Apostles be (as no man can deny it is) the best Interpreter of the Laws of *Christ*, the Dispute one would

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would think should be at an end : for Part I. that it always was the custom to receive the Children of *Christian Parents* into the Church by Baptism, we have sufficient evidence for the greatest part of the most early Writers, *Irenæus*, *Tertul-^{J.G.Voss. de Bapt. disput. 14. p. 178. & seq.}* *lian*, *Origen*, *Cyprian*, &c. whose Testimonies I do not produce, because I find them collected by others, and the Argument thence so forcible and conclusive, ^{*Forbes. Instr. Hist. Theol. 1. 10. c. 5. sect. 14. & seq. Dr. Ham. Defence of Infant Baptism c. 4. sect. 2.*} that the most zealous Opposers of *Infant Baptism* know not how to evade it; the Testimonies being so clear, and not the least shadow that I know of in those times of any thing to make against it. There was indeed in *Cyprian's* time a Controversie about the baptizing of Infants, not *whether* they ought to be baptized (for of that there was no doubt) but concerning the *time* when it was to be administred, whether on the *second*, or *third*, or whether as *Circumcision* of old, to be deferred till the *eighth* day. For the determining of which, *Cyprian*, sitting in Council with sixty six Bishops, writes a *Synodical Epistle* to *Fidus*, to ^{*Ep. 60. p. 97.*} let him know, that it was not necessary to be deferred so long, and that it was their universal Judgment and Resolution, that the *mercy* and *grace* of God was

Part 1. was not to be denied to any, though as soon as he was *born*: concluding that it was the Sentence of the Council, that none ought to be forbidden Baptism and the Grace of God; which as it was to be observed and reteined towards all men, so *much more* towards *Infants* and *new-born* Children. And that this Sentence of theirs was no *novel* Doctrine, S. Augustine assures us, where speaking concerning this *Synodical* Determination, he tells us, that in this *Cyprian* did not make any new Decree, but kept the Faith of the Church most firm and sure. I shall only take notice of one place more out of *Cyprian*, which methinks evidently makes for this purpose, where describing the great wickedness and miserable condition of the *lapsed*, such as to avoid Persecution had done Sacrifice to the Idols; he urges this as one of the last and highest Aggravations, that by their Apostasie their Infants and Children were exposed to ruine, and *had lost that which they had obtained at their first coming into the world*, (which whether he means it of their *right* to Baptism, or their having been actually baptized, and losing the *fruit* and *benefit* of their Baptism, is all one to my purpose) and there-

Ep. 28. ad
Hierom. 10.
2. col. 108.

De lapsis,
p. 171.

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therefore he brings them in thus elegant-Part 1.
ly pleading against their Parents at the
great day : *'Twas no fault of ours, we did
not of our selves forsake the Sacraments
of our Lord, and run over to joyn with
prophane impieties ; the unfaithfulness of
others has undone us, we have found our
Parents to be murderers ; they denied us
God for our Father, and the Church for
our Mother ; for while we alas were little,
unable to take any care of our selves, and
ignorant of so great a wickedness, we were
ensnared by the treachery of others, and by
them betrayed into a partnership of their im-
pieties.*

This was the Case of Infants, but those
who made up the main Body of the bap-
tized in those days were *adult* Persons,
who flocking over daily in great num-
bers to the Faith of Christ, were receiv-
ed in at this door. Usually they were
for some considerable time *catechized*
and trained up in the Principles of the
Christian Faith, till having given Testi-
mony of their Proficiency in Knowledge,
(to the Bishop or Presbyter, who were *Conc. Laod.*
appointed to take their Examination, *Can. 46.*
and to whom they were to give an ac-
count once a week of what they had
learnt) and of a sober and regular con-
X versation

Part I. versation, they then became *Candidates* for Baptism, and were accordingly taken in; which brings me to the next Circumstance considerable, concerning

The *Time* when Baptism was wont to be administred. At first all times were alike, and Persons were baptized as opportunity and occasion served; but the Discipline of the Church being a little settled, it began to be restrained to two solemn and stated times of the Year, *viz.* *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*. At *Easter*, in memory of Christs *death* and *resurrection*, correspondent unto which, are the two parts of the Christian Life, represented and shadowed out in Baptism, *dying* unto sin, and *rising* again unto newness of life; in order to which, the Parties to be baptized were to prepare themselves by a strict observation of *Lent*, disposing and fitting themselves for Baptism by Fasting and Prayer. In some places, particularly the Churches of *Thessaly*, *Easter* was the only time of Baptism, (as *Socrates* tells us) which was the reason why many amongst them died *unbaptized*: but this was an Usage peculiar to them alone. The ancient custom of the Church (as *Zonaras* tells us) was for Persons to be baptized, especially upon the *Saturday* be-

Tert. de
Bapt. c. 19.
p. 232.

Cyrl. pref.
Catech. ad
Illum. p. 6.

Hist. Eccl.
l. 5. c. 22. p.
287.

In Can. 45.
Conc. Laod.

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before *Easter-day*, the reason whereof Part I. was, that this being the *great* or *holy Sabbath*, and the mid-time between the day whereon Christ was buried, and that whereon he rose again, did fitliest correspond with the Mystery of Baptism, as it is the type and representation both of our Lord's *burial* and *resurrection*. At *Whitsuntide*, in memory of the *Holy Ghost's* being shed upon the *Apostles*, the same being in some measure represented and conveyed in Baptism. When, I say, that these were the two fixed times of Baptism, I do not strictly mean it of the precise days of *Easter* and *Whitsuntide*, but also of the whole intermediate space of Fifty days that is between them, which was in a manner accounted *Festival*, and Baptism administred during the whole time, as I have formerly noted. Besides these, *Nazianzen* reckons the Feast of *Epiphany* as an Annual time of Baptism, probably in memory either of the *Birth* or *Baptism* of our *Saviour*, both which anciently went under that Title. This might be the custom in some places, but I question whether it was universal; besides that, afterwards it was prohibited and laid aside. But though Persons in health, and the

ΕΙς το
δγ. Βαπτ.
Οrat. 40.
p. 654.

Part I. space that was requisite for the Instruction of the *Catechumens*, might well enough comport with these Annual Returns, yet if there was a *necessity* (as in case of *sickness* and danger of *death*) they might be baptized at any other time. For finding themselves at any time surprized with a dangerous or a mortal Sickness, and not daring to pass into another World without this *badge* of their Initiation into Christ, they presently signified their earnest desire to be baptized, which was accordingly done, as well as the circumstances of a Sick Bed would permit. These were called *Clinici*, (of whom there is frequent mention in the Ancient Writers of the Church) because *ἐν τῇ κλίνῃ βαπτίζοντο* baptized as they lay along in their Beds. This was accounted a less Solemn and perfect kind of Baptism, partly because 'twas done, not by *Immersion*, but by *Sprinkling*; partly because Persons were supposed at such a time to desire it, chiefly out of a *fear* of death, and many times when not thoroughly *Masters* of their Understandings. For which reason Persons so baptized (if they recovered) are by the Fathers of the *Neocæsarean* Council rendered ordinarily incapable of being

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being admitted to the degree of *Presbyter* in the Church. Indeed 'twas very usual in those times (notwithstanding that the Fathers did solemnly and smartly declaim against it) for Persons to defer their being baptized till they were near their death, out of a kind of *Novatian* Principle, that if they fell into sin after Baptism, there would be no place for Repentance, mistaking that place of the *Apostle*, where 'tis said that *If they who have been once enlightened* (*ἀπαξ φωτισθέντες*, which the Ancients generally understand of Baptism) *fall away, 'tis impossible to renew them again unto repentance.* For some such reason we may suppose it was that *Constantine* the Great deferred his Baptism till he lay a dying; the same which *Socrates* relates of his Son *Constantius*, baptized a little before his death. And the like he reports of the Emperour *Theodosius*, who apprehending himself to be arrested with a Mortal Sicknes, presently caused himself to be baptized, though he recovered afterwards. To this custom of *Clinic Baptism*, some, not improbably think the *Apostle* has reference in that famous place, where he speaks of those that are baptized for the dead, *καὶ ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν*, which

*Eusebius
vit. Const.*

*l. 4. c. 61,
62. p. 557.*

*Hist. Eccl.
l. 2. c. 47. p.*

151.

*Lib. 5. c. 6.
p. 262.*

Vid. Voss.

*Thef. de
Baptism. p.*

*161. & de
Resur. Thef.*

18.

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Part 1. they expound with reference to the *state of the dead*, and that 'tis meant of, such who in danger of death would be baptized, that it might fare well with them after death. This *Epiphanius* thinks the truest Interpretation, that it's meant of *Catechumens*; who being suddenly surprised with death, would be baptized, that so their sins being remitted in Baptism, they might go hence under the hope of that eternal life which awaits Good men after death, and testifie their belief and expectation of their future happy Resurrection. Others think it may refer to the place of Baptism, those who are baptized *ἐν νεκρῶν*, *over the Graves* or Sepulchres of the dead, it being an ancient and general Custom to have their Religious Meetings, and to perform their Publick Exercises at the *Tombs of Martyrs*; there being numerous instances in the *Acts* of the *Martyrs*, of such as were baptized in the *Cæmeteria* over the *Monuments* of the dead. Which soever of these is most futable, yet certainly either of them is far more probable than that which many talk so much of, as if the Apostle meant it of a *custom* common in those Primitive Times amongst the *Corinthians*, and other Hereticks, where when

Hæres. 28.
p. 54. *Vid.*
Mat. Blast.
Syntag. c.
1. lit. B. p.
41.

Vid. Prud.
Peristeph.
hymn. 8. p.
110.

Vid. Epiph.
hæres. 28.
contra Ce-
vinth. p. 54.

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when any died without Baptism, they Part 1.
 used to place another under his *bed*, who
 was baptized for him, in his stead, whence
Tertullian calls it a *vicarious Baptism*; it De resur.
 carn. c. 48.
 being highly improbable that the great
 Apostle would fetch an Argument to con-
 firm so solemn and fundamental a Princi-
 ple of the Christian Faith, as the Doctrine
 of the *Resurrection* is, from such an absurd
 and ridiculous Rite, used only by the
worst of Hereticks. But this only by the
 way.

(For the *Place* where this Solemn action
 was performed, it was first unlimited,
 any place where there was water, as *Ju-
 stin Martyr* tells us, in Ponds, or Lakes,
 at Springs or Rivers, as *Tertullian* speaks; Ap. 2. p. 93.
 De Bapt. c. 4.
 but always as near as might be to the
 place of their Publick Assemblies, for
 it was seldom done without the presence
 of the *Congregation*; and that for very
 good reason, both as 'tis a principal
 act of Religious Worship, and as 'tis the
 initiating of Persons into the Church,
 which therefore ought to be as publick
 as it could, that so the whole Con-
 gregation might be Spectators and Wit-
 nesses of that Profession and Engage-
 ment which the Person baptized then
 took upon him; and this they so ze-
 lously

Part 1.
Can. 59.

lously kept to, that the *Trullan* Council allows not Baptism to be administred in a private *Chappel*, but only in the public Churches, punishing the persons offending, if *Clergie* with *Deposition*, if *Laiety* with *Excommunication*; which yet (as both *Zonaras* and *Balsamon* expound the *Canon*) is to be understood unless it be done with the leave and approbation of the Bishop of the *Diocese*. For this reason they had afterwards their *Baptisteria* or (as we call them) *Fonts*, built at first near the Church, then in the Church Porch, to represent Baptisms being the *entrance* into the Mystical Church: afterwards they were placed in the Church it self. They were usually very large and capacious, not only that they might comport with the general Customs of those Times of Persons baptized, being *immersed* or put under water; but because the stated times of Baptism returning so seldom, great Multitudes were usually baptized at the same time. In the middle of the *Font* there was a *partition*, the one part for Men the other for Women, that to avoid offence and scandal they might be baptized asunder. Here it was that this great Rite was commonly performed, though
in

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in cases of necessity they dispensed with Part 1.
 private Baptism, as in the case of those
 that were *sick*, or shut up in prison, of
 which there were frequent Instances in
 times of Persecution. Many there were
 in those days (such especially as lived in
 the parts near unto it) whom nothing
 would serve, unless they might be bap-
 tized in *Jordan*, out of a Reverence to
 that place where our *Saviour* himself
 had been baptized; this, *Constantine* tells
 us, he had a long time resolved upon, to
 be baptized in *Jordan*, though God cut
 him short of his desire. And *Eusebius*
 elsewhere relates, that at *Bethabara*, be-
 yond *Jordan* where John baptized, there
 was a place whither very many even in
 his time used to resort, earnestly desiring
 to obtain their Baptism in that place.
 This doubtless proceeded from a very de-
 vout and pious Mind, though otherwise
 one place can contribute nothing more
 than another, nothing being truer than
 what *Tertullian* has observed in this
 case, *That it's no matter whether we be*
baptized amongst those whom John bap-
tized in Jordan, or whom Peter baptized in
Tyber.

*De vita
 Const. l. 4.
 c. 62.*

*Euseb. de
 loc. Hebr.
 in voce
 Bethabara
 p. 59.*

*De Bapt. c.
 4. p. 225.*

The last Circumstance I propounded
 concerns the manner of the Celebration
 of

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Part I. of this Sacrament, and for this we may observe, that in the *Apostles* Age Baptism was administred with great nakedness and simplicity, probably without any more formality than a short Prayer, and* repeating the words of Institution: and indeed it could not well be otherwise, considering the vast Numbers that many times were then baptized at once. But After-Ages added many Rites, differing very often according to Time and Place; I shall not undertake to give an account of all, but only of the most remarkable, and such as did generally obtain in those times, keeping as near as I can to the order which they observed in the administration, which usually was thus: Persons having past through the state of the *Catechumens*, and being now ripe for *Baptism*, made it their request to the Bishop that they might be baptized; whereupon, at the Solemn times they were brought to the entrance of the *Baptistery* or *Font*, and standing with their Faces towards the *West*, (which being directly opposite to the *East*, the place of *light*, did symbolically represent the Prince of *darkness*, whom they were to renounce and desie) were commanded to stretch out their hand as it were

Cyrl. Hieros. Catech. myst. 1. p. 506. seq. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 253.

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were in defiance of him. In this posture **Part I.** they were interrogated by the Bishop, concerning their breaking of all their former leagues and commerce with Sin, and the Powers of Hell, the Bishop asking, *Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his Works, Powers, and Service?* To which the party answered, *I do renounce them.* *Dost thou renounce the World, and all its Pomps and Pleasures?* Answer. *I do renounce them.* This renuntiation was made twice, once before the Congregation, (probably at their obtaining leave to be baptized) and presently after at the Font, or place of Baptism, as Tertullian witnesses. Next, they made an open confession of their Faith, the Bishop asking, *Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, &c. in Jesus Christ his only Son, who, &c. dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholick Church, and in one Baptism of Repentance for the Remission of Sins, and Life Everlasting?* To all which the Person answered, *I do believe.* This Form of Interrogation seems to have been very Ancient in the Church, and the Apostle is justly thought to refer to it, when he styles Baptism *the Answer of a good Conscience towards God*, which can reasonably refer

Ambr. de
Sacram. l.
1. c. 2. form.

4 p. 429.

De cor. mil.

c. 3. p. 102.

De Spect. c.

13. p. 79.

Vid. Const.

Apost. l. 7. c.

42. p. 993.

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Part I. fer to nothing so well as that common Custom of *answering* in Baptism. These Answers and Actions in the *adult* were done by the Persons themselves, in *children* by their *Sponsores*, as *Tertullian* calls them, their *Sureties* and Undertakers; for that both Infants and adult Persons had those that undertook for them at their Baptism, is so notoriously known, that it were impertinent to insist upon it. After this there was a kind of *Exorcism*, and an *Insufflation* or Breathing in the Face of the Person baptized, (which *St. Augustine* calls a most ancient *tradition* of the Church) by which they signified the expelling of the Evil Spirit, and the breathing in the Good Spirit of God: not that they thought that every one before Baptism was *possessed* by the Devil, but only that *we are by nature children of wrath*, Enemies to God, and Slaves to Sathan. Nor did they lay any stress upon the bare Usage of those Symbolick Rites, but wholly upon the Churches Prayers, which at the same time were made, that God would deliver those Persons from the power of Sathan, and by his Spirit unite them to the Church. This being done they were brought to the *Font*, and were first

De Bapt. c.
18. p. 231.

De nupt. &
concup. l. 2.
c. 29. tom.
7. col. 856.

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first stript of their garments, (intimating Part I. thereby *their putting off the Old Man, which is corrupt with his deceitful Lusts;*) and that all occasions of Scandal and immo-desty might be prevented in so Sacred an action, the Men and Women (as I observed before) were baptized in their distinct apartments, the Women having *Deaconesses* to attend them, to undress and dress them, to stand about and overshadow them, that nothing of Indecency might appear. Then followed the *Unction*, a Ceremony of early date, by which (says St. Cyril) they signified that they were now cut off from the *wild-Olive* and were *ingrafted* into Christ the *true Olive-tree*, and made partakers of his fruits and benefits; or else to shew that now they were become *Champions* for Christ, and had entred upon a state of Conflict, wherein they must strive and contend with all the Snares and Allurements of the World, as the *Athletæ* of Old were anointed against their Solemn Games, that they might be more expedite, and that their *Antagonists* might take less hold upon them; or rather, probably to denote their being admitted to the great Privileges of Christianity, a *chosen Generation*, a *royal Priesthood*, an *holy Nation* (as

Const. Apost. l. 3. c. 15. p. 899. Epiph. Hæres. 79. p. 447. ib. l. 7. c. 23. p. 379. Catech. 2. p. 518.

Ambros. de Sacri. l. 1. c. 2. tom. 4. p. 429. Vid. Dion. Areop. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. 2. p. 279.

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Part i. (as the *Apostles* styles Christians) Offices of which *anointing* was an ancient Symbol, both of being designed to them, and invested in them. And this account *Tertullian* favours, where, speaking of this *Uction* in Baptism, he tells us, 'tis derived from the Ancient, *i.e.* *Jewish* Discipline, where the Priests were wont to be *anointed* for the Priesthood. For some such purpose they thought it fit that a Christian (who carries *unction* in his very name) should be anointed as a *spiritual* King and Priest, and that no time was more proper for it than at his Baptism, when the Name of *Christian* was conferred upon him. Together with this we may suppose it was that the *sign* of the *Cross* was made upon the Forehead of the Party baptized. When this Ceremony first began to be used in Baptism, I find not: St. *Basil* reckons it (and he puts it too in the first place) amongst those Ancient *customs* of the Church that had been derived from the Times of the *Apostles*. That it was generally in use in the Times of *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, we have sufficient Evidence from their Writings, and indeed cannot reasonably suppose they should omit it in this Solemn action (where it is so proper) when they used

De Bapt. c.
7. p. 226

De Spir. S.
c. 27. 29m.
2. p. 351.
Vid. Tert.
adv. Mar-
cion. l. 3. p.
226.
Cyp. de laps.
p. 169.
Frons cum
signo, &c.
De unit.
Eccl. 2. 185.
Ea parte
corporis.
&c. adv.
Demet. p.
203. rena-
ti. & signo
Christi sig-
nati, &c.

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used it in the commonest actions of their **Part I.**
 Lives, *Tertullian* expressly assuring us, that De cor. mil. c. 3. p. 102. Vid. Cyril. ad Illuon. Catech. 4. p. 81.
 upon every motion, at their going out and coming in, at their going to bath, or to bed, or to meals, or whatever their Employment or Occasions called them to, they were wont frontem signaculo terere, to make the sign of the Cross upon their Fore-head; and this they did (as he there tells us) not that it was imposed upon them by any Law of *Christ*, but brought in by a pious Custom, as that which did very much tend to strengthen and increase their Faith. By this they shewed, that they were not ashamed of the Cross of *Christ*, nor unwilling to engage in the Service of a crucified Master, which yet was so great a scandal to the Heathen World, and therefore they so often triumphed in this Symbol and representation of it. Thus *St. Hierom*, though he lived in a time when Christianity had almost quite prevailed over all other Religions Præf. in Joh. tom. 3. p. 24.
 in the World, yet counted this the great matter of his Glory, *That I am* (says he) *a Christian, that I was born of Christian Parents, and do carry in my Fore-head the Banner of the Cross.* And indeed so great a respect did they bear to this Representation of our Saviours Death, that
 (though

Part I.

Lib. 1. C.
Justin. tit.
8. L. unic.

(though they did not *worship* the Cross yet) they took care that it should not be put to any mean and trivial uses, be painted or made upon the *ground*, or engraven upon Marble *pavements*, or any thing where it might be trampled upon, as is expressly provided by a Law of *Theodosius* and *Valentinian*.

The action having proceeded thus far, the party to be baptized was wholly *immersed* or put under water, which was the almost constant and universal Custom of those times, whereby they did more notably and significantly express the *three great ends and effects* of Baptism; for as in Immersion there are in a manner, three several acts, the *putting* the Person into water, his *abiding* there for a little time, and his *rising* up again: so by these were represented Christs *death*, *burial*, and *resurrection*, and in conformity thereunto, our *dying* unto sin, the *destruction* of its power, and our *resurrection* to a new course of life; by the Persons being put into water was lively represented the putting off the body of the sins of the Flesh, and being washed from the filth and pollution of them: by his abode under it, which was a kind of Burial in the water, his entring into a
state

Ch. 10. Primitive Christianity 321

state of death or mortification, like as **Part 1.**

Christ remained for some time under the state or power of death, therefore *as many as are baptized into Christ*, are said to be baptized into his death, and to be buried with him by Baptism into death, that the Old Man being crucified with him, the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth he might not serve sin, for that he that is dead is freed from sin, as the Apostle clearly explains the meaning of this Rite: and then by his *emersion*, or rising up out of the water, was signified his entering upon a new course of life, differing from that which he lived before, that like as *Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father*, even so we also should walk in newness of life. But though by reason of the more eminent significancy of these things, *immersion* was the common practice in those days, and therefore they earnestly urged it, and pleaded for it, yet did they not hold *sprinkling* to be unlawful, especially in cases of necessity, as of weakness, danger of death, or where convenience of immersing could not be had; in these and such like cases *Cyprian* does not only allow, but plead for it, and that in a discourse on purpose, when

*Ep. 76. ad
Magn. p.
153.*

Y

the

Part I. the question concerning it was put to him. Upon this account it is that immersion is now generally disused in these parts of the World, and sprinkling succeeded in its room, because the tender bodies of most Infants (the only Persons now baptized) could not be put under water in these cold *Northern* Climates, without apparent prejudice to their Health, if not their Lives ; and therefore in this, as in other cases, *God requires Mercy rather than Sacrifice*, especially considering that the main ends of Baptism are attained this way, and the mystical effects of it as *truly*, though not so *plainly* and significantly represented, by sprinkling, as by putting the Body under water.

Ubi supra.
Hist. Eccl.
lib. 6. c. 26.
p. 673.
Adv. Prax.
c. 26. p. 443.
de Cor. mil.
c. 3. p. 460.
Dion. Areop.
Eccles. Hierarch. c. 2. p.
254. Ibid. de
Sacram.
lib. 2. c. 7.
p. 424.

This immersion was performed *thrice*, the Person baptized being three several times put under water ; a custom which *Basil* and *Sozomen* will have derived from the Apostles ; 'tis certain that it was very early in the Church, being twice mentioned by *Tertullian* as the common practise. By this trine immersion they signified (say some) their distinct adoring the three Persons in the *blest Trinity*, and therefore the custom was, in repeating the words of Institution, at the

Part 1.

and when differences and controversies did still remain about it, the fourth Council of Toledo, out of a Letter of Gregory the great, thus determined the case, that they should still use their single immersion, and that this would sufficiently express the mysteries of Baptism; the diving under water would denote Christ's death and descending into Hell, the coming out, *his Resurrection*: the single immersion would express the *unity* of the God-head; while the *Trinity* of Persons would be sufficiently denoted by the Persons being baptized *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. The Person baptized being come out of the water, was *anointed* the second time, as St. Cyril tells us; and indeed whatever becomes of the *Unction* that was before, 'tis certain that that which *Tertullian* speaks of as a part of the ancient Discipline, was after the Person was baptized; which being done, he had a *white Garment* put upon him, to denote his having put off the *lusts* of the Flesh, his being washed from the filth and defilement of his former sins, and his resolution to maintain a life of unspotted innocence and purity, according to that solemn and strict engagement which in Baptism he had

De Baptism. c. 7.

p. 226.

Cyril. Catech. 4. p.

533.

Jobius apud Phot.

Cod. 222.

c. 18. col.

597.

Ambros. de

his qui myst.

er. in tit.

ant. c. 7.

tom. 4. p.

425.

had taken upon him. In this they allu- Part 1
 ded to that of the Apostle, *that as many
 as are baptized into Christ, have put on
 Christ, i. e.* have engaged in that strict
 and holy course of life, which he, both
 by his doctrine and example, has left to
 the world: accordingly Persons baptized
 are both by the Apostle, and by the
 Greek Fathers frequently called *φωτισ-
 μένοι*, or the *enlightned*, because they
 now professed that they were *become the
 children of the light and of the day*, and
 would not return to *works of darkness*
 any more; and this, as they expected
 mercy from *Christ* at the great day;
 therefore the white Garment was wont
 to be delivered to them with such a
 charge as this, *Receive the white and im-
 maculate Garment, and bring it forth with-
 out spot before the Tribunal of our Lord
 Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have Eternal
 Life. Amen.* From the wearing of these
 white Vestments (as we have observed
 before) *Pentecost* (which was one of the
 two annual times for Baptism) came to
 be called *Whitesunday*, as also the Sun-
 day after *Easter*, (which was the other
 time) *Dominica in albis*, because then
 they laid this *white Robe* aside; for it was
 the custom for Persons baptized to wear

Gregor. Sa-
 cramentar.
 inter Li-
 turgic. La-
 tinor. tom. 2.
 p. 269. vid.
 Eucholog.
 Græc. in
 Offic. S.
 Baptism.
 p. 357.

Part 1. this Garment for a whole week after they were baptized, and then to put it off, and lay it up in the Church, that it might be kept as an evidence against them, if they violated or denied that *Faith* which they had owned in Baptism; whereof we have a memorable instance under the *Arrian* Persecution in *Africk*. *Elpidophorus*, a Citizen of *Carthage*, had lived a long time in the Communion of the Church, but apostatizing afterwards to the *Arrians*, became a most bitter and implacable Persecutor of the *Orthodox* Party: amongst others whom he summoned to be put to the Rack, was one *Miritas*, a venerable old *Deacon* (who had been the *Undertaker* for him at his Baptism) who being ready to be put upon the Rack, plucked out the white Vestment wherewith *Elpidophorus* had been clothed at his Baptism, and with tears in his eyes thus openly bespake him before all the People: *These, Elpidophorus, thou minister of error, these are the Garments that shall accuse thee, when thou shalt appear before the Majesty of the great Judge; these I will diligently keep as a testimony of that ruine, that shall depress thee down into the lake that burns with fire and Brimstone; these*
are

*Victor
utic.de
persecut.
Vand. lib.
3 fol. 43.*

are they that were girt upon thee, when **Part I.**

thou camest pure out of the Holy Font; and these are they that shall bitterly pursue thee when thou shalt be cast into the place of Flames; because thou hast clothed thy self with cursing, as with a Garment, and hast cast off the sacred obligation of thy Baptism, and the true Faith which thou didst then profess and take upon thee.

These were the main and most considerable circumstances wherewith Baptism was administred in the primitive Church; some whereof were by degrees antiquated and disused; other Rites there were that belonged only to particular Churches, and which, as they were suddenly taken up, so were as quickly laid aside; others were added in after times, till they encreased so fast that the usage and the number of them became absurd and burdensome, as may appear by the Office for Baptism in the *Romish Ritual* at this day.

As a conclusion to this Chapter, I had once thought to have treated concerning **CONFIRMATION**, which ever was a constant appendage to Baptism, and had noted some thing to that purpose; but shall supersede that labour, finding it so often, and so fully done by others in just

*B. Tayler.
Dr. Hammond.
Mr. Baxter.
Mr. Hammer.
Mr. Daille.*

Part I.

discourses, that nothing considerable can be added to them; only I shall give this brief and general account of it: all Persons baptized in the Ancient Church, (according to their age and Capacity, Persons *adult*, some little time after Baptism; *Children*, when arrived to Years of competent ripeness and maturity) were brought to the Bishop, there further to *confirm* and ratifie that *compact* which they had made with God in Baptism, and by some solemn acts of his Ministry, to be themselves *confirmed* and strengthened, by having the *grace* and blessing of God conferred upon them, to enable them to discharge that great promise and engagement which they had made to God. This was usually performed with the Ceremony of *Unction*, the Person confirmed being anointed by the Bishop, or in his absence by an inferior Minister; and indeed *Unction* was an ancient Rite used in the *Jewish* Church, to denote the conferring of gifts or graces upon Persons, and thence probably, amongst other reasons (as many other usages were) might be derived into the *Christian* Church; though a *learned* Man is of opinion, that *Unction* was never used in *confirmation*, but where

Hen. Vales.
Annot. ad
Euseb. Hist.
Eccles. p.
135. col. 1.

where the Person being in case of neces- Part 1.
sity baptized by some of the inferior
Clergy, had not been before anointed ;
otherwise those who had received com-
pleat Baptism, were not afterwards a-
nointed at their confirmation, for which
the Council of *Orange* is most express *Can. 1.*
and clear. And indeed that Confirma-
tion was often administred without this
Unction, no man can doubt that knows
the state of those times, being done on-
ly by solemn *imposition* of the Bishops
hands, and by devout and pious Prayers,
that the Persons confirmed might *grow in*
grace and the knowledge of Christ, and be
enabled to perform those Vows and pur-
poses, and that profession of Faith which
they had before embraced in Baptism,
and then again owned before the whole
Congregation. Till this was done they
were not accounted *compleat Christians*,
nor admitted to the holy *Communion*,
nor could challenge any actual right to
those great priviledges of *Christianity* ;
whence it is that the Ancients so often
speak of Confirmation, as that which did
perfect and consummate *Christians*, as
being a means to conferr greater mea-
sures of that grace that was but begun
in Baptism ; upon all which accounts,
and

Part I. and almost exactly according to the *primitive* usage, it is still retained and practised in our own *Church* at this day: and happy were it for us, were it kept up in its due power and vigour; sure I am, 'tis too plain that many of our unhappy breaches and controversies in Religion do (if not wholly, in a great measure) owe their birth and rise to the neglect and contempt of this excellent usage of the Church.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Lord's Supper, and the
administration of it in the
ancient Church.

The Persons dispensing this Ordinance, who. The Persons Communicating, the Baptized or the Faithful: Suspension from this Ordinance according to the nature of the offence. The Eucharist sent home to them that could not be present. The case of Serapion. A custom in some places to give the Sacrament to Persons when dead, if they died before they could receive it, and why. The Eucharist kept

kept by Persons at home. Sent abroad. Part 1.

This laid aside, and in its stead Eulogia, or pieces of consecrated Bread sent from one Church to another, as tokens of Communion. The time of its administration: sometimes in the morning, sometimes at night: varied according to the peace they enjoyed. How oft they received the Eucharist. At first every day. This continued, in Cyprians time, Four times a week. Afterwards less frequented. The usual place of receiving, the Church: ordinarily, not lawful to consecrate it elsewhere. Oblations made by Persons before their communicating. Their Agapæ, or Love-Feasts, what. Whether before or after the Sacrament. How long continued in the Church. The manner of celebrating this Sacrament, collected out of the most ancient Authors. The holy Kiss. The general prayer for the Church, and the whole world. The consecration of the Sacrament: the form of it out of S. Ambrose. The Bread, common Bread. The sacramental Wine mixed with Water. This no necessary part of the Institution. Why probably used in those Countreys. The posture of receiving not always the same. Singing Psalms during the time of celebration. Followed

Part I.

*Followed with prayer and thanksgiving.
The whole action concluded with the
Kiss of Peace.*

THE holy *Eucharist*, or *SUPPER* of our *LORD*, being a Rite so solemnly instituted, and of such great importance in the *Christian* Religion, had place accordingly amongst the Ancients in their *publick* offices and devotions. In speaking to which, I shall much what observe the same method I did in treating concerning *Baptism*, considering the *Persons*, the *Time*, the *Place*, and the *Manner* of its celebration. The *Persons* administering were the ordinary *Pastors* and *Governours* of the Church, those who were set apart for the ministration of holy offices ; the institution was begun by our *Lord* himself, and the administration of it by him committed to his *Apostles*, and to their ordinary successors, to the end of the world. We find in *Tertullian*, that they never received it from any but the hand of the *President*, which must either be meant of the particular custom of that *Church* where he lived, or of *Consecration* only ; for otherwise the custom was, when the *Bishop* or *President* had by solemn Prayers and blessings consecrated the

*De Cor.
mil.c.3.
p.102.*

Ch. II. Primitive Christianity. 333

the Sacramental Elements, for the *Dea-* Part I.
cons to distribute them to the People,
as well to those that were absent, as to
them that were present, as *Justin Mar-*
tyr expressly affirms, and as the custom ^{*Apol. 2.*}
generally was afterwards. For the *Per-* ^{*p. 97.*}
sons communicating at this Sacrament, at
first the *whole Church*, or Body of *Chri-*
stians, within such a space, that had em-
braced the Doctrine of the Gospel, and
been baptized into the Faith of *Christ*,
used constantly to meet together at the
Lord's Table. As Christians multiplied,
and a more exact Discipline became ne-
cessary, none were admitted to this Or-
dinance till they had arrived at the de-
gree of the *Faithful*; for whoever were
in the state of *Catechumens*, *i. e.* under
instruction in order to their Baptism, or by
reason of any heinous crime, under the *cen-*
sures and suspension of the Church, and
not yet passed through the several stages
of the *Penitents*, might not communicate,
and were therefore commanded to *de-*
part the Church, when the rest went to
the celebration of the Sacrament: for
looking upon the *Lord's Supper* as the
highest and most solemn act of Religi-
on, they thought they could never take
care enough in the dispensing of it; ac-
cordingly

Part I. cordingly who ever was found guilty of any *scandalous* fault, was, according to the nature of the offence, debarred the Communion, a shorter or a longer time, and sometimes all their life, not to be reconciled and taken into the Communion of the Church, till they had continued their Repentance to their death-bed. As for those Persons that could not be present, either through distance of place, sickness, or any other just cause, the *Eucharist* was wont to be sent *home* to them, some little pieces of the *consecrated* bread *dip*t in the Sacramental *Cup*, which were usually carried by the *Deacon*, or some inferior Officer of the Church, or in cases of necessity, by any other Person; as in the case of *Serapion*, of whom *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* relates, that having been all his life a good man, at last *lapsed* in a time of Persecution, and though he oft desired reconciliation, yet none would communicate with him; not long after he was seized upon by a mortal sickness, depriv'd of the use of his Speech and Senses, but coming to himself after four days, he sends his Nephew, a little Boy, late at night for one of the *Presbyters* to come to him; the Minister was at that time sick, but considering

Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 6. c. 44. p. 246.

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considering the exigence of the case, Part I. gives the Boy a little piece of the *Eucharist*, bids him to *moisten* it with a little water, and so give it him in his mouth, which he did, and immediately the old Man chearfully departed this Life. For the better understanding of which, we are to observe, that those who had lapsed into Idolatry, were to undergo a very long time of Penance, and were not many times admitted to the Communion, till they were near their death; and because it sometimes hapned that they were overtaken with sudden death, before the Sacrament could be administred to them, thence a custom sprung up to give it them *after* they were *dead*, which they did doubtless upon this ground, that they might give some kind of evidence, that those Persons died in the *peace* and *communion* of the Church, though this usage was afterwards by many *Councils* abrogated and laid aside. I take no notice in this place of their giving the Eucharist to *new-baptized Infants*, the case being so commonly known and obvious. In those early times nothing was more common than for Christians either to carry, or to have sent to them some parts of the *Eucharist*.

Vid. Conc.

3. Carth.

Can. 6.

Conc. 6. in

Trull. Can.

83.

Part I. *charist*, which they kept in some decent place in their houses against all emergent occasions, especially to *fortifie* and strengthen their Faith in times of Persecution, and to *encrease* kindness and amity with one another; whence one that was well versed in *Church-Antiquities*, conjectures that whenever they entertained Friends or Strangers, they used before every meal first to give them some parts of the holy *Eucharist*, as being the greatest *badge*, the strongest *band* of true love and friendship in the World. Besides these parcels of the Sacramental Elements, there were wont at the celebration of the Communion to be pieces of Bread (which remained of the offerings of the People) which being solemnly *blessed* by the Bishop, might be given to those who had no Right to be at the *Lord's Table*, as to the *Catechumens*, and such like, and were to them instead of the Sacrament: these pieces were properly called *Eulogiæ*, because set apart by solemn *benediction*, and were sent up and down the Towns and Villages round about, to testify and represent their mutual union and fellowship with one another; nay, and sometimes from Churches in one Country to those

Joa. Front.
Epist. de
φιλοσοφί-
αις Veter.
p. 6.

Ch. II. Primitive Christianity 337

those that were in another; which was Part i.
 also done by the *Eucharist* it self: for so
Irenæus in a Letter to Pope *Victor* tells us, *Euf. Hist.*
Eccl. l. 5. c.
23. p. 193.
 that the Ministers of Churches (though differing in some little circumstances) did yet
 use to send the *Eucharist* to one another.
 Which Custom is also taken notice of by
Zonaras; but because the carrying the *Sacramental Elements* up and down the world
 was thought not so well to consist with the
 Reverence and Veneration that is due to
 this solemn ordinance, therefore it was abolished by the *Laodicean Synod*, and these
Eulogiae or pieces of Bread appointed at *East* *Can. 14.*
 to be sent up and down in their room.

For the *Time*, the next Circumstance,
 when they met together for this Solemn
 Action, it was in general at their Publick
 Assemblies, on the *Lord's Day* always,
 or the first day of the Week, as we find
 it in the History of the *Apostles Acts*, besides
 other days, and especially *Saturday*, on
 which day all the Churches in the World
 (those of *Rome* only and *Alexandria* excepted)
 used to celebrate this Sacrament, as the
Historian informs us. *Socr. l. 4. c.*
22. p. 286.
 What time of the day they took to do
 it is not altogether so certain. Our blessed
Saviour and his Apostles celebrated
 at night, at the time of the *Jewish Pass-*

Z

over;

Part I. over ; but whether the *Apostles* and their immediate Successors punctually observed this Circumstance may be doubted ; 'tis probable that the Holy *Eucharist*, which *St. Paul* speaks of in the Church of *Corinth*, was solemnized in the *morning*, the *Apostles* calling it a *Supper*, (as *Chrysostom* thinks) not because it was done in the *evening*, but the more effectually to put them in mind of the time when our *Lord* did institute those Holy Mysteries. *Tertullian* assures us, in his Time 'twas done *in tempore victus*, about *Supper-time*, (as all understand him) and very often in the morning *before day*, when they held their Religious Assemblies, of which *Pliny* also takes notice in his Letter to the *Emperour*. For in those times of Persecution, when they were hunted out by the inquisitive malice of their Enemies, they were glad of the remotest Corners, the most unseasonable Hours, when they could meet to perform the joynt Offices of Religion. But this communicating at evening or at night either lasted only during the extreme Heats of Persecution, or at least wore off apace ; for *Cyprian* expressly pleads against it, affirming that it ought to be in the *morning*, and so indeed in a short time it prevailed

In loc.

Decor. mil.
c. 3 p. 102.

Lib. 10. ep.
97.

Ad Cæcil.
ep. 63 p.
104.

Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity. 339

vailed over most parts of the World, ex-Part I.
cept in some places of *Egypt* near *Alexan-* ut supra p. 287.
dria, of which *Socrates* tells us, that after
they had sufficiently feasted themselves in
the evening, they were wont to receive
the Sacrament. Under this (circumstance
of Time we may take occasion to consider
how oft in those days they usually met at
this Table. And at first (while the *Spirit*
of Christianity was yet warm and vigour-
ous, and the Hearts of Men passionately
inflamed with the love of *Christ*) 'tis more
than probable they communicated *every*
day; or as oft as they came together for
Publick Worship, insomuch that the *Ca-*
nons Apostolical and the Synod of *Antioch* Can. 9. Con-
cil. Antioch.
Can. 2.
threaten every one of the Faithful with
Excommunication, who came to Church
to hear the Holy Scriptures, but stay not
to *participate* of the *Lord's Supper*; the eye
of their Minds was then almost wholly
fixed upon the memory of their *crucified*
Saviour, and the oftner they fed at his Vid. ep. Cyp.
ad Thaboit.
ep. 56 circa
init. p. 89.
Table the stronger and healthier they
found themselves, and the more able to
encounter with those fierce Oppositions
that were made against them. This custom
of receiving the Sacrament *every day* con-
tinued some considerable time in the
Church, though in some places longer
Z 2 than

Part I.

*De Orat.**Dom. p. 192.**De Sacr. l.**5. c. 3. p.**449. to. 4.**Ad Jovi-**nian. p.**108. to. 2.**De Serm.**Dom. in**mont. l. 2.**tom. 4. col.**1147. 2^a**ep. 118. ad**Januar. c.**3. col. 557.**Basil. ep.**289. ad**Cæsariam.**Patrit. to.**3. p. 279.*

than in others, especially in the *Western* Churches. From *Cyprian* we are fully assured 'twas so in his time, *We receive the Eucharist every day* (says he) *as the food that nourishes us to Salvation.* The like *St. Ambrose* seems to intimate of *Millan*, whereof he was Bishop, nay and after him *S. Hierom* tells us, 'twas the custom of the Church of *Rome*; and *S. Augustine* seems pretty clearly to intimate, that it was not unusual in his time. In the Churches of the *East* this custom wore off sooner, though more or less according as the Primitive Zeal did abate and decay; *S. Basil* telling us that in his time they communicated *four times a week*, on the *Lord's Day*, *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday*, yea and upon other days too, if the *memory* or Festival of any Martyr fell upon them. Afterwards, as the Power of Religion began more sensibly to decline, and the commonness of the thing begat some contempt, (*Manna* it self was slighted, after once it was rained down every day) this Sacrament was more rarely frequented, and from once a day it came to once or twice a week, (and then fell to once a month, and after for the most part to thrice a year, at the 3 great solemnities of *Christmas*, *Easter*, and *Whitsuntide*. To so great a coldness and indifferency did the Piety and

Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity. 341

and Devotion of *Christians* grow, after Part 1. once the true Primitive Temper and Spirit of the Gospel had left the World.

Concerning the third circumstance, the Place where this Holy Supper was kept, much need not be said, it being a main part of their Publick Worship, always performed in the place of their Religious Assemblies. 'Twas instituted by our *Saviour* in a Private *house*, because of its *Analogie* to the *Jewish Passover*, and because the necessity of that time would not otherwise admit. By the Apostles and Christians with them 'twas celebrated in the houses of Believers, generally in an *upper room*, set apart by the bounty of some Christian for the uses of the Church, and which (as I have formerly proved) was the constant *separate* place of Religious Worship for all the Christians that dwelt thereabouts. Under the Severities of great Persecutions they were forced to fly to the *mountains*, or to their *Cryptæ*, or Vaults under ground, and to celebrate the Sacrament at the *Tombs* of Martyrs, and over the *Asbes* of the Dead. Churches growing up into some Beauty and Regularity, several parts of the Divine Office began to have several places assigned to them, the Communion Service being removed to the up-

Part I. per or *East* end of the Church, and there performed upon a Table of Wood, which afterwards was changed into one of Stone, and both of them not uncommonly, though *metaphorically*, by the Fathers styled *Altars*, and the *Eucharist* it self, in later Times especially, the *Sacrament of the Altar*. This place was called *θυσιαστήριον*, and was fenced in with *Rails*, within which the *Clergie* received the Sacrament, as the *Laiety* did without. Here it was that they all used to meet at this Heavenly Banquet, for out of this place they allowed not the Celebration of the Sacrament, (a thing expressly forbidden by the *Laodicean Council*) unless in cases of great necessity; and therefore 'twas one of the principle Articles for which the Synod of *Gangra* deposed *Eustathius* from his Bishoprick, that he kept *private meetings*, persuading some that were averse to the *publick Assemblies* of the Church, that they might communicate and receive the Sacrament at *home*.

Socrat. l. 2.
c. 43. p. 156.
de Conc.
Gangr.
Can. 5, 6.

We come last of all to consider the *Manner* how the *Eucharist* was celebrated in the ancient Church; but before we describe that, we are to take notice that after the Service of the *Catechumens*, and before the beginning of that of the *Faithful*, at which the *Eucharist* was administred, the

cu-

custom was to present their *offerings*, every one according to his Ability bringing some Gifts as the *first fruits* of his Increase, which was by the Minister laid upon the Altar or Communion Table, none of them then thinking it fit to appear before the Lord empty. And therefore St. Cyprian severely chides a Rich Widow of his time, who came without giving any thing to the Poor Mans Box, and did partake of their offerings without bringing any offering of her own. These oblations were designed to the Uses of the Church, for the Maintenance of the Ministry, and the Relief of the Poor, especially out of them were taken the Bread and the Wine for the Sacramental Elements, the Bread being no other than common Bread, such as served for their ordinary uses, there being then no notice taken of what has for so many hundred years, and still is to this day fiercely disputed between the Greek and the Latine Church, whether it ought to be Leavened or Unleavened Bread. Out of these Oblations also 'tis probable they took (at least sent Provisions extraordinary) to furnish the common Feast, which in those days they constantly had at the celebration of the Sacrament, where the Rich and the Poor feasted together at the

Part I.

*Irenæus
adv. Hæc.
l. 4. c. 45. p.
362.
Just. Mart.
Ap. 2. p. 98.*

*De oper. &
elemos. p.
218.*

Part I.

same Table. These were called *Agape* or *Love-Fests*, (mentioned by S. *Jude*, and plainly enough intimated by S. *Paul*) because hereat they testified and confirmed their mutual *love*, and kindness, a thing never more proper than at the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*; which is not only a *seal* of our peace with God, but a *sign* and a pledge of our Communion and Fellowship with one another. Whether this Banquet was *before* or *after* the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, is not easie to determine; 'tis probable, that in the *Apostles* time, and the Age after them, it was *before* it, in imitation of our *Saviours* Institution, who celebrated the Sacrament after Supper, and S. *Paul*, taxing the Abuses of the Church of *Corinth*, reproves them, *That when they came together for the Lord's Supper, they did not one tarry for another, but every one took his own Supper, i.e.* that provision which he had brought from home for the common Feast, which was devoured with great Irregularity and Excess, some eating and drinking all they brought, others (the Poor especially that came late) having nothing left, one being hungry and another drunken. All this, 'tis plain was done before the Celebration of the *Eucharist*, which was never administred till the whole

1 Cor. II.

Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity. 345

whole Church met together. That there- Part 1.

fore which the *Apostle* reproves and corrects, is there Indecency and Intemperance, commanding both rich and poor to *wait for one another*, and to eat this common Meal together, that they might the more orderly and unanimously pass to the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*. In after Ages this Feast was not till the Communion was over, when the Congregation feasted together, and so departed; and so *Chrysostom* expressly tells us 'twas in his days; besides, nothing is more obvious than that

Hom. 27. in 1 ad Cor. p. 559.

it was customary in those times for Persons to *fast* till they had received the Communion. I know a very learned man is of opinion, that these *Love-Feasts* were not kept at the same time with the Celebration of the *Eucharist*; but besides that his Arguments are not conclusive, the whole stream of learned Writers runs full against him. These Feasts continued for some Ages, till great inconveniencies being found in them, they were prohibited to be kept in Churches by the *Laodicean Synod*, and after that by the Council of *Carthage*; which though but Provincial or National Councils, yet the Decrees were afterwards ratified by the sixth *Trullan Council*, and the custom in a short time dwindled into nothing.

Albas. de rit. Eccl. obs. 18. p. 135.

Can. 28.

Can. 74.

These

Part I.

Catech.
myst. 5.Cyril. lib. p.
534.Const. Apost.
l. 8. c. 11. p.
1313.Just. Mart.
Ap. 2. p. 97.

These things being premised, the Sacramental Elements prepared, and all things ready, they proceeded to the Action it self, which (following for the main the account that is given us by St. *Cyril of Jerusalem*, and taking in what we find in others) was usually managed after this manner: First, the *Deacon* brought water to the *Bishop* and the *Presbyters* that stood round about the Table to wash their Hands, signifying the *purity* that ought to be in those that draw nigh to God, according to that of the *Psalmist*, *I will wash mine hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord.* Then the *Deacon* cried out aloud *Mutually embrace and kiss one another.* This *holy kiss* was very ancient, commonly used in the Apostles times, and in the succeeding Ages of the Church, but especially at the Sacrament, as a sign of the unfeigned *reconciliation* of their Minds, and that all Injuries and Offences were blotted out, according to our *Lord's* Command, *When thou bringest thy gift to the Altar, and rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave thy gift before the Altar and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* This being done, they fell to Prayer, the whole Congregation praying together with the Minister, (which

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(which therefore *Justin Martyr* calls the Part I. Common Prayer, the Form whereof in the *Ibid.*

Apostolical Constitutions is described at large) for the universal peace and welfare *Lib. 8. c. 10. p. 1011.*

of the Church, for the tranquility and quietness of the World, for the prosperity of the Age, for wholsom weather and fruitful *Tert. Apol. c. 39.*

seasons, for all sorts of Persons, for Kings *Aug. ep. 118.*

and Emperours, and all in Authority, for *Const. Apost. l. 2. c. 57. p. 881.*

Souldiers and Armies, for Believers and Unbelievers, for Friends and Companions, for

the sick and distressed, and in short, for all that stood in need of help. This General

Prayer is frequently mentioned by the Ancient Fathers, as that which was at the *Ib. p. 538.*

beginning of the communion Service; though *St. Cyril* place it a little later, as *Cyrl. p. 537.*

doubtless it was in his time. After this, followed the mutual Salutation of the Minister and People, the Minister saying, *Chrysin c. 9. 1. ad*

The Lord be with you; to whom the People answered, *Cor. Hom. 36. p. 652.*

And with thy Spirit. The Minister cried, *2 ad Cor. c. 8. Hom. 18. p. 873.*

Lift up your hearts, (nothing being more suitable, says *St. Cyril*, at this time, than *Cypr. de Or. dom. 195.*

that we should shake off all worldly cares, and exalt our hearts to God in heaven) the

People truly assenting and yielding to it, answered, *We lift them up unto the Lord*

The Minister proceeded, *Let us give thanks unto the Lord,* (for what more fit than

thank-

348 Primitive Christianity. Ch. II.

Part I. thankfulness to God, and a high resentment of such Favours and Blessings) to this the People returned, *It is meet and just so to do.* Whereupon the Minister proceeded to the Prayer of Consecration, (the

Lib. 7. c. 26.
p. 979.

Form whereof we have in the *Apostolical Constitutions*) wherein he express'd huge thankfulness to God for the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of his Son, for the Shedding of his Blood for us, and the Celebration of it in this Sacrament; for

Just. Mart.
ib. p. 98.

condescending to admit them to such mighty Benefits, and praying for a closer

Cyril. p.
541.

unity to one another in the same Mystical Body; concluding usually with the *Lord's Prayer*, and the hearty and universal Ac-

Const. Apost.
l. 8. c. 13. p.
1022.

clamation of *Amen* by all that were present. This done, the Minister cried out

TA AGIA TOIZ AGIOIZ, *Holy things belong to holy Persons*; the People answering, *There is one holy, one Lord Jesus Christ.* Then he exhorted them to a due Participation of the Holy Mysteries, which Cyril tells us was done by way of Divine Hymn, singing, *Come taste and see that the Lord is good.*

Ib. p. 545.

After this, the Bishop or Presbyter took the Sacramental Elements, sanctified them by a Solemn Benediction. The form of

De Sacr. l.
4. c. 5. p.
439.

Consecration we have in S. Ambrose: *Lord, make this oblation now prepared for us, to be-*

Ch.ii. Primitive Christianity. 349

become a reasonable and acceptable sacrifice; Part I.
*this, which is the Figure of the Body and
 Bloud of our Lord Jesus Christ; who the day
 before he suffered took the Bread in his Sa-
 cred Hands, looked up to Heaven, giving
 thanks to thee, O Holy Father, Almighty and
 Everlasting God, blessed it, and having bro-
 ken it, gave it to his Apostles and Disciples,
 saying, take, eat all of it, for this is my Bo-
 dy which is broken for many. Likewise al-
 so after Supper he took the Cup, that very day
 before he suffered, looking up to Heaven, gi-
 ving thanks to thee, Holy Father, Almighty
 and Everlasting God, and having blessed it,
 gave it to his Apostles and Disciples, saying,
 Take and drink ye all of it, for this is my
 Bloud. After this, he first brake the
 Bread, and delivering it to the Deacon, ^{Just. Mart.}
 he distributed it to the Communicants; ^{ubi supr.}
 and after that the Cup, which was like-
 wise delivered to them; for the Custom
 of communicating under *one kind* onely,
 as is used in the Church of Rome, was
 then unknown unto the World, nay, and
 for above a thousand Years after Christ.
 In some cases ('tis true) they dipt the
 Bread in the Wine, as in the case of
 baptized Infants, to whom they admini-
 stred the Eucharist in those Primitive
 Times, and to very Weak Dying Persons
 who*

Part I. who would not otherwise have swallowed the Bread ; and that by this means they might keep the Sacrament at home against all emergent occasions ; and this probably might in time make the way easier for introducing the Sacrament under the kind of Bread only. Their Sacramental Wine was generally diluted and mixed with *water*, as is evident from *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Cyprian* and others. *Cyprian* in a long Epistle, expressly pleads for it, as the only true and warrantable Tradition, derived from *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and endeavours to find out many *mystical* significations intended by it, and seems to intimate as if he had been peculiarly *warned* of God to observe it according to that manner ; an *Argument* which that Good Man often produces as his Warrant to knock down a Controversie when other Arguments were too weak to do it. But although it should be granted, that our *Saviour* did so use it in the Institution of the Supper, (the Wines of those *Eastern* Countries being very *Strong* and *Generous*, and that our *Saviour* as all sober and temperate Persons, might probably abate its strength with Water, of which nevertheless the History of the Gospel is wholly silent) yet this being a thing in it self

Ut supra.
Iren. l. 4. c.
57. l. 5. c. 2.
Ad Cecil.
ep. 63. p.
100.

Ib. p. 105.

in-

Ch. 11. Primitive Christianity. 351

indifferent and accidental, and no way *ne-* Part 1.
cessary to the Sacrament, could not be ob-
 ligatory to the Church, but might either
 be done or let alone. The posture where-
 in they received it was not always the
 same: the *Apostles* at the Institution of it
 by our *Saviour*, received it (according to
 the Custom of the *Jews* at Meals at that
 time) *lying along* on their sides upon Beds
 round about the Table; how long this
 way of receiving lasted I find not; in the
 time of *Dionysius Alexandrinus* the custom *Apud Euf.*
 was to stand at the *Lord's Table*, as he in- *Hist. Eccl.*
 timates in a Letter to Pope *Xystus*; other *l. 7. c. 9. p.*
Gestures being taken in, as the Prudence *255.*
 and Piety of the Governours of the
 Church judged most decent and comely
 for such a solemn Action; the Bread and
 Wine were delivered into the Hands of
 those that communicated, and not as the
 Superstition of after-ages brought in, *in-*
jected or thrown into their *mouths*. *Cyril* *Pag. 545.*
 tells us, that in his time they used to
 stretch out their *right* Hand, putting their
left Hand under it, either to prevent any
 of the Sacramental Bread from falling
 down, or as some would have it, hereby *Vid. Conc.*
 to shadow out a kind of figure of a *Cross*. *6. in Trull.*
Can. 101.

During the time of Administration,
 which in Populous Congregations was

Part I. no little time, they sung *Hymns* and
Lib. 8. c. 13. Psalms (the Compiler of the *Apostolical*
p. 1023. Constitutions particularly mentions the
33 Psalm) which being done, the whole
Action was solemnly concluded with
Prayer and Thanksgiving, (the Form
whereof is likewise set down by the Au-
thor of the *Apostolical* Constitutions) that
God had thought them worthy to parti-
cipate of such sacred Mysteries, and the
People being blessed by the Bishop or the
Minister of the Assembly, and having a-
gain saluted each other with a *Kiss of*
peace, as a Testimony of their hearty Love
and kindness, (whence *Tertullian* calls
this Kiss *signaculum orationis*, the *Seal of*
Prayer) the assembly broke up, and they
returned to their own Houses. This for
the main was the Order wherein the first
Christians celebrated this Holy Sacrament;
for though I do not pretend to set down
every thing in that precise and punctual
order wherein they were always done,
(and how should I, when they often va-
ried according to *time* and *place* ?) yet I
doubt not but whoever examines the usa-
ges of those times, will find that 'tis done
as near as the nature of the thing would
bear.

Videsis
Dion. Areop.
de Eccl.
Hierarch.
c. 3. p. 284.
l. 7. c. 27. p.
92 c. 6. l.
8. c. 15.
Cyr. p. 546.

De Orat.
c. 14.

The End of the First Part.

Primitive Christianity;
 OR THE
 RELIGION
 OF THE
 Ancient Christians,
 In the First Ages of the Gospel.

PART I.

The Religion of the Primitive Christians as to those Vertues that respect themselves.

CHAP. I.

Of their Humility.

The second Branch of Religion comprehended under the Notion of Sobriety, and discovered in some great instances
 A of

2 Primitive Christianity. Ch. I.

Part 2. *of it. The proper tendency of the Christian Religion to beget humility. This divine temper eminently visible in the first Christians: made good out of their Writings. The great humility and self-denial of Cyprian. What Nazianzen reports to this purpose of his own Father. Their modest declining that just commendation that was due to them. Many who suffered, refus'd the honourable Title of Martyrs. Nazianzen's vindication of them against the suggestions of Julian the Apostate. The singular meekness and condescension of Nebrius amidst all his Honors and Relations at Court. Their stooping to the vilest Offices, and for the meanest persons: dressing and ministring to the sick, washing the Saints Feet, kissing the Martyrs Chains. The remarkable Humility of Placilla the Empress, and the Lady Paula. An excellent discourse of Gregory Nyssen's against Pride.*

NEXT to Piety towards God, succeeds that part of Religion that immediately respects *our selves*, expressed by the Apostle under the general Name of **Sobriety**, or the keeping our selves within those bounds & measures which
God

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity. 3

God has set us, Vertues, for which the Part 2.

Primitive Christians were no less renowned than for the other: Amongst them I take notice of their *Humility*, their *contempt* of the *World*, their *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, their *Courage* and *Constancy*, and their exemplary *Patience* under Sufferings. To begin with the first.

Humility is a vertue that seems more proper to the Gospel; for though *Philosophers* now and then spake a few good words concerning it; yet it found no real entertainment in their lives, being generally *animalia gloriæ*, creatures pufft up with wind and emptiness, and that *sacrific'd* only to their own praise and honor: whereas the doctrines of the Gospel immediately tend to level all proud and swelling Apprehensions, to plant the world with mildness and modesty, and to *cloath men with humility*, and the ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit: By these we are taught to dwell at home, and to converse more familiarly with our selves, to be acquainted with our own deficiencies and imperfections, and rather to admire *others* than to advance *our selves*: for the proper notion of *Humility* lies in a low

Part 2. and mean *estimation* of our selves, and an answerable carriage towards others, *not thinking of our selves more highly than we ought to think*, nor being unwilling that other men should value us at the same Rate. Now that this was the excellent Spirit of *Primitive Christianity* will appear, if we consider how earnestly they protested against all *ambitions* and vain-glorious Designs, how chearfully they condescended to the *meanest* Offices and Employments, how studiously they declined all Advantages of *applause* and credit, how ready they were rather to give praise to others, than to take it to themselves, *in Honor preferring one another*. St. Clemens highly commends his *Corinthians*, that all of them were of an humble temper, in nothing given to vain-glory, *subject* unto others rather than *subjecting* others to themselves, ready to give rather than receive. Accordingly, he exhorts them (especially after they were fallen into a little faction and disorder) still to be humble-minded, to lay aside all haughtiness and pride, foolishness and anger; and not to glory in *wisdom, strength, or riches*, but *let him that glories, glory in the Lord*; and to follow the example of
our

*Epi. ad
Corinth.
p. 3.*

Pag. 17.

Pag. 20.

Ch. 1. **Primitive Christianity.** 5

our Lord, the *Scepter* of the Majesty of Part 2.

God; who came not in the vain-boasting of Arrogancy and Pride, although able to do whatsoever he pleased, but in great meekness and humility of mind, appearing in the world without any *form or comeliness, or any beauty that he should be desired*, suffering himself to be despised and rejected of men, who esteemed him not, and hid as it were their Faces from him; who counted himself a Worm and no man, and was accordingly made a reproach of men, and the derision of the People; all they that saw him, laughing him to scorn, shooting out the lip, and shaking the head at him. Now if our Lord himself was so humble-minded, what should we be, who are come under the yoke of his grace? This and much more to the same purpose, has that Venerable and Apostolical man in that admirable Epistle, wherein he does lively describe and recommend the meek and excellent spirit of the Gospel.

Justin the Martyr treads in the very same Steps: He tells us, that we are to shun all *sinister* suspicions of others, and to be very careful what *Opinion* we entertain of them: That we are to be of a meek and unpassionate mind, not envy-

*Epist. ad
Zen. & St.
ren. p. 5*

6 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 2. *ing* the good esteem and respect which others have, nor ambitiously affecting, or putting our selves forwards upon any service or employment: that we are humbly to submit our selves, not in *words* only, but in all our *actions*, so as that we may appear not to be *Impostors* and *Dissemblers*, but mild and undesigning persons; for whoever would govern his life aright must be modest and *unpragmatical*, not angry and contentious, but silently consider with himself what is best and fittest to be done: that we are to account others wise and prudent, and not to think our selves the only discreet and understanding persons: that we must not despise their admonitions; but hearken to their Counsels when ever they are just and true. When some in St. Cyprian's time had made a noble and resolute confession of *Christ* in the face of the greatest danger, lest they should be *exalted* above measure in their own thoughts, he bids them remember, according to the discipline of the Gospel, to be humble, and modest and quiet, that they might preserve the honor of their name, and be as glorious in their *Actions*, as they had been in their *Words* and *Confessions* of

Ibid. p.
508. 509.

Epil. 5.
Presb. &
Diacon. p.
23.

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity. 7

of Christ, that they should imitate their Part 2.

Lord, who was not more proud, but more humble at the time of his passion, *washing his Apostles feet*: and follow the counsel and pattern of *St. Paul* who in his greatest Sufferings continued meek and humble, and did not arrogate any thing to himself, no not after he had been honoured with a Translation into *Paradise* and the *third Heavens*. And great reason he had to press this with all possible vehemency at that time, lest Christians by their turbulent and unquiet Carriage should provoke the Heathen Magistrate to greater severity against them: and indeed who could better do it than he, who was himself so eminent for humility? For though some *Schismatical* persons (whose wildness and insolence he sought to restrain) endeavored to insinuate that he was not so humble as became a man of his Rank and Order, and as were our *Lord* and his *Apostles*; yet observe how he vindicates himself in a Letter to *Papianus* the Head of the Party; As for my humility (*says he*) 'tis sufficiently known, not only to the Brethren, but the *Gentiles* themselves do see and respect it, and thou thy self didst know

*Epi. 69.
p. 116.*

8 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 2. and honor it, whilst thou wast yet in the Church, and didst Communicate with me: but which of us I pray is farthest from humility? *I*, who daily serve the Brethren, and receive those who come unto the Church with all joy and kindness; or *Thou*, who makest thyself a *Bishop* over thy *Bishop*, and pretendest to be a Judge appointed by God over him who is thy Judge? And indeed how far the good man was from any designs of greatness and domination appear'd in this, that when the people had universally chosen him to be *Bishop*, he privately withdrew and retir'd himself, reckoning himself unworthy of so great and honorable an Office, and giving way to others, whose age and experience rendred them (as he thought) much fitter for it: but the importunity of the People being heightned into a greater impatience, and having found where he was, they beset the house, and blocked up all passages of Escape till they had found him, and forc'd it upon him. And with no less humility did he behave himself in the discharge of it: when consulted by some of his *Clergy* what they should do in the case of the *lapsed*, he answers,
That

Pontius
Diac. in
vit. Cyprian.
p. 12.

E. 5. p.
13. 14.

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity. 9

That being now alone he could say no- Part 2.
 thing to it, for that he had determined
 from his first entring upon his Bishop-
 rick not to adjudge any thing by his
 own *private* order without the counsel
 of the *Clergy*, and the consent of the
People. So meanly did that wise and
 excellent man think of himself, and so
 much did he attribute to the Judg-
 ment and Concurrence of those that
 were below him.

Nazianzen reports of his Father (a *Orat. 19.*
Bishop too) that amongst other Vertues *in laud.*
 he was peculiarly remarkable for *Patr. p.*
Humility; which he did not express *300.*
Philosopher-like in little Arts of external
modes and carriage, putting on a feign'd
 behavior, like women, who having no
 natural beauty of their own, fly to the
*Additional*s of Dresses and Paintings,
 δι' εὐχρηστοῦν ἀρχήν, becoming more
 deformed by their ascetic Beauty.
 His Humility consisted not in his *dress*,
 but in the *constancy* of his mind; not in
 the *hanging down* of his head, or the
softness of his tone, or the *demureness*
 of his look, or the *gravity* of his Beard,
 or the shaving of his head [the *cropping*
of his hair] or the manner of his gate;
 but in the frame and temper of his Soul,
 being

10 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 2. being as humble in his mind, as he was *sublime* and excellent in his Life; and when no man could arrive at the perfection of his Vertues, yet every one was admitted to a freedom of Converse with him. Both in his garb and diet he equally avoided *pomp* and *sordidness*; and though a great restrainer of his appetite, would yet seem not to do it, lest he should be thought plainly to design glory to himself by being *needlessly* singular above other men. How industriously do we find them many times disowning that deserved praise and commendation that was due to them? How modestly does *Justin Martyr* decline his adversaries commendation of the Acuteness and Elegancy of his Reasonings? resolving all into the *Grace of God*, that enabled him to understand and expound the *Scriptures*, of which Grace he there persuades all men freely and fully to become partakers with him. Of the *Confessors* in the time of the Persecution under *M. Aurelius*, *Eusebius* out of the relation which the Churches of *Vienna* and *Lyons* in *France* sent to the Churches in *Asia*, tells us, that although they had often born witness to the truth at
the

Dialog.
cum Tryph.
p. 280.

Hist. Eccl.
lib. 5. c. 2.
p. 165.

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 11

the dearest rate of any thing on this Part 2.
side Death, though they had been frequently thrown to wild *Beasts*, expos'd to the *Fire*, and the remains of wounds and violence were visible in all parts of their bodies; yet in imitation of the great humility of the Son of God, they would not after all this (which yet was not uncommon in those times) either call themselves *Martyrs*, or suffer others to call them so; but if any of the Brethren either by letter or discourse had saluted them by that Title, they would severely reprove and check them for it; acknowledging themselves at best but vile and despicable *Confessors*, and with tears begging of the Brethren to be instant with God by Prayer, that they might perfect all by a real Martyrdom. Hence it was, that when *Julian* the *Apostate* refus'd to proceed against the Christians by open persecution, as his Predecessors had done, because he envied them the *Honor* of being *Martyrs*; *Nazianzen* answers, that O'at. 3. (in Julian. 1.) he was greatly mistaken if he suppos'd P. 73. they suffered all this, rather out of a desire of *Glory*, than a love of *Truth*: such a foolish and vain-glorious humor might indeed be found amongst his
Philo-

12 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 2. *Philosophers*, and the best of his Party, many of whom have put themselves upon strange attempts meerly to gain the honor of a name, and the reputation of *Divinity*: But for Christians, they had rather *die* in the Cause of Religion, although no man should ever know of it, than to live and flourish amongst others with the greatest Honor and Esteem; it being our great solicitude not to please *Men*, but only to obtain honor from God: Nay, some of us (*says he*) arrive to that *heroick* pitch, as to desire an intimate *Union* unto God, meerly for himself, and not for the honors and rewards that are laid up for us in the other world. Memorable the humility of the great *Constantine*, that when all mens mouths were filled with the honorable mention of his Vertues, and one took upon him to praise him to his Face, telling him how happy he was whom God had thought worthy of so great an *Empire* in this World, and for whom he reserv'd a much better *Kingdom* in the next; he was highly offended with the Address, and advis'd the man that he should not presume to talk so any more; but rather turn his *praises* of him, into *prayers*

to

De Vit.
Constant.
lib. 4. cap.
 48. p. 551.

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 13

to God for him, that both here and Part 2. hereafter he might be thought worthy to be numbred amongst the Servants of God.

I cannot but take notice of what St. Hierome reports of *Nebridius*, a young Roman Gentleman, Cousin-German to the *Empress*, by whom he was brought up in the Palace, Play-fellow and Companion to the young Emperors (to whom he was very dear) train'd up with them in the same Studies and Arts of Education; that notwithstanding all this, and that he was then in the prime and vigor of his Youth, yet he was neither *debauched* by intemperance amidst the delicacies and pleasures of the Court, nor *swell'd* with pride, reflecting upon others with a surly look; but render'd himself aimable unto all: the Princes he lov'd as Brethren, and *rever'd* as Lords: Their Attendants and Ministers, and all the Orders of the Palace he had so endear'd by kindness and condescension, that they who were so much *below* him, did in a manner think themselves *equal* to him.

I shall give but one Instance more of the humility of those times, and that is their ready condescending to any Office

*Ad Salvi-
nam Ne-
bridii vi-
duam, de
viduit. ser-
vand. p. 75.
tom. 1.*

Friend of

14 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 2. *vice* or Imployment, though never so mean, about the poorest Christian: they thought it not below them to *cook* and provide Victuals for them, to *visit* the imprison'd, to *kiss* their chains, to *dress* their wounds, to *wash* their Feet. And in this our Lord himself went before them, when a little before his Death he rose from Table, girt himself, *wash'd and wip'd his Disciples Feet*, and then told them what influence this ought to have upon them, *That if their Lord and Master had wash'd their Feet, they ought also to wash one another's Feet, for that he had given them an example, that they should do as he had done to them*; and good reason, the servant not being greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him. Accordingly we find this particular Act of Christian condescension frequently us'd in the Primitive Church. St. Paul expressly requires it as a Qualification in a *Widow* that was to be taken in as a *Deaconess* into the Church that she be *one that has us'd to lodge Strangers, and to wash the Saints Feet*. Tertullian assures us 'twas usually done by Christians in his time, to go into the Prisons to *kiss* and embrace

1 Tim. 5.
10.

Ad uxor.
l. 2. c. 4. p.
168.

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity. 15

embrace the Martyrs Chains, to harbor Part 2.
and provide for indigent Brethren, and
to bring Water to wash the Saints feet :
No Office so low which they were not
content to stoop to.

When *Placilla* the Empress was check'd by some of the Court for her mighty condescension in visiting the hospitals, and curing the lame and the sick with her own hands, preparing and giving them their Provisions, as a thing too much below her State and Grandeur : She answered, That to distribute Gold became the *Emperor* ; but for her part she thought her self oblig'd to do this for God, who had advanc'd her to that Honor and Dignity: Often instilling this pious Counsel into her Husband, *It becomes you, Sir, always to remember, what you once were, and what you now are : by which means you will shew your self not to be ingrateful to your great Benefactor, and will govern the Empire committed to you justly and lawfully, and to the honor of him that gave it.*

St. Hierom reckoning up the Vertues of *Paula*, a Lady of the greatest Descent and Nobility in Rome ; but devoting her self afterwards to the solitudes of a Religious Life, tells us of her, that for
humility

*Theodoret
H. Eccl. lib.
5. c. 18. p.
161.*

*E. itaph.
Paul. e ad
Eustoch. fi-
liam.
tom. 1. p.
175.*

16 **Primitive Christianity.** Ch. 1.

Part 2. humility (the *prime* and chief Vertue of *Christians*) she carried her self with so much lowliness that whoever had seen and not known her, could not but have mistaken her for the meanest of the Maids that waited on her. When ever she appeared in the midst of those devout and pious Virgins that dwelt with her, she always seem'd both in *Cloaths* and *Voice*, and *Garb*, and *Gate*, the least and most contemptible of all the rest. So studious was the Piety of those days to keep the Lustre of their own perfections from sparkling in their eyes, and not fondly to admire the *glimmerings* of their own light ; being so far from falsely arrogating to themselves those Excellencies which they had not, that they industriously conceal'd those excellent perfections which they had.

De beatitudinib. Orat. 1.
Tom. 1. p. 768.

I cannot better conclude this Chapter, than with the excellent Reasonings of St. *Gregory of Nyssa* against *priding* a mans self in any external ornaments or advantages; where he thus entertains the proud man : He that looks to *himself*, and not to the things that are *about* him, will see little reason to be *proud*: for what is *Man*? Say the best of him, and that which may add the greatest honor

Ch. I. Primitive Christianity. 17

Honor and Veneration to him, that Part 2.

he's *born* of *Nobles*, and yet he that adorns his descent, and speaks highest of the Splendor and Nobility of his House, does but derive his pedigree from the *Dirt*: and to enquire more narrowly into the manner of his being born into the world common with other men, were to uncover what shame and modesty require should be conceal'd in the profoundest silence. And dost thou not *blush*, thou *Statue* of *earth*, who art shortly to be crumbled into *Dust*, who *Bubble-like* containest within thee a short-liv'd humor? dost thou not *blush* to swell with pride and arrogance, and to have thy mind stuffed with vain idle thoughts? Hast thou no regard to the double term of mans life, *how* it *begun*, and *where* it will *end*? Thou pridest thy self in thy *juvenile* age, and flatterest thy self in the flower, the Beauty and sprightliness of thy Youth, that thy *Hands* are ready for *Action*, and thy *Feet* apt to dance nimble *measures*; that thy Locks are *wav'd* by the wanton Motions of the wind, and a soft Down overgrows thy Cheeks, that thy purple-robcs put the very *roses* to the Blush, and thy Silken Vestures

B

are

18 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 2. are *variegated* with rich Embroidery of *Battels*, *Huntings*, or pieces of ancient *History*; or brought down to the feet, artificially set off with black, and curiously made fast with *strings* and *buttons*. These are the things thou look'st at, without any regard to *thy self*. But let me a little as in a *glass* shew thee thy own Face, *who* and *what* thou art: Hast thou not seen in a publick *Charnel-house* the unvailed mysteries of Humane Nature; *bones* rudely thrown upon heaps; naked *Skulls* with hollow *Eye-holes*, yielding a dreadful and deformed Spectacle? Hast thou not beheld their *grinning* Mouths, and *gastly* Looks, and the rest of their Members carelessly dispersed and scattered? If thou hast beheld such Sight as these, in *them* thou hast seen thy self. Where then will be the Signs of thy present Beauty, that good *Complexion* that adorns thy Cheeks, and the color of thy Lips, that frightful *Majesty*, and supercilious loftiness that once resided in thine Eyes, or thy Nose that once beautifully grac'd thy Cheeks? Where are thy Locks that were wont to reach thy Shoulders, the Curles that used to adorn thy Temples? What are become

of

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 19

of those Arms that used to draw the Part 2.
Bow, those Leggs that used to bestride
thy *Horses*? Where's the *Purple*, the *sil-*
ken Garments, the *long Robe*, the *Belt*, the
Spurs, the *Horse*, the *Race*, the *Noise*, and
Pransings; and all the rest of those
things that now add Fuel to thy pride?
Tell me, where then will those things
be, upon the account whereof thou
dost now so much *boast* and *bear up* thy
self? Was there ever any *dream* so fond
and inconstant, any thing more *phan-*
tastick that ever appeared to a man
asleep? What *shadow* was ever so thin,
so incapable of being grasp'd within the
hollow of the Hand, as this dream of
Youth, which at once *appears*, and im-
mediately *vanishes* away. Thus the
Holy Man treats the young *vapouring*
Gallant, and levels his Pride with the
sober considerations of Mortality: In
his following Discourse he deals with
persons of riper years, and such as are
in places of *Authority* and Power, and
shews how absurd and uncomely pride
is in them: which it might not be im-
pertinent to represent, but fearing to
be tedious I forbear.

CHAP. II.

**Of their Heavenly-mindedness, and
contempt of the World.**

The Soul rightfully constituted naturally tends upwards, especially when assisted with the aids of Religion. The first Christians much above the World. Not wrought upon by Temptations of Advantage. They accounted it the greatest Honor to be Christians. Contented with a very mean portion of outward things. The Story of some of our Saviour's Kindred brought before Domitian. The Sect of the Apostolici and Apotactici, the Fathers of the Mendicant Orders in the Church of Rome. The little Care which Christians then had of rich furniture and costly provisions. Their denying to go to publick Feasts and Sports made for the pleasure of the People. This charged upon them by the Heathens. The case of the Woman that was seized upon by an Evil Spirit while she was at the Theatre. Their chearful parting with any Worldly Comforts, Estates, Relations, &c.

2. Ch. 2. **Primitive Christianity.** 21

A strange Heroick Speech of Melania at Part 2. the loss of her Husband and two Sons, mentioned by St. Hierom. Eager for Martyrdom, as what would presently send them to Heaven. Their frequent supporting themselves under sufferings with discourses of the Kingdom above. Thence accus'd as treasonable Affecters of the Empire. Their Contempt of the World much promoted by the Opinion that the Day of Judgment was near at Hand. Christians in the World like sojourners in a strange Country.

THe Soul of Man being Heaven-born cannot but partake of the Nature and Disposition of that Country, and have a Native Inclination to that place from whence it borrows its *Original*: And though 'tis true, in this corrupt and *degenerate* State it is deeply sunk into *matter*, clogg'd and overborn with the earthly and sensual propensions of the lower appetites, the desires and designs of men creeping up and down like *shadows* upon the surface of the Earth; yet does it often, especially when assisted with the aids of *Religion*, attempt its own rescue and release. The mind of a good man is

22 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.**

Part 2. acted by manly and *generous* impulses, it dwells in the Contemplations of the *upper Region*, tramples upon those little projects of Profit or Pleasure which *ensnare* and *enslave* other men, and makes all its designs subservient to the Interests of a better Country. A temper of mind never more triumphant in any than in the *Christians* of old, whose *Conversations were in Heaven*, and whose Spirits breath'd in too free an Air to be caught with the Charms of the best Enjoyments this World could afford: They looked upon the delights and advantages of this life as things not worthy to arrest their affections in their journey to a better. *Justin Martyr* discoursing with *Trypho* the Jew, tells him, that they were careful with all fear to converse with men according to the scriptures, not greedily desiring to gain *Riches*, or *Glory*, or *Pleasure* to themselves, concerning any of which no man could lay any thing to their Charge; and that they did not live like the great men of *his People* of whom God himself has left this reproachful Character, *That their Princes were companions of Thieves, every one loving Gifts, and following after Rewards.*

Nay,

Dial. cam
Tryph. p.
308.

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 23

Nay, *Trypho* himself bears them this Part 2. testimony, though doubtless he intended it as a reproach to them, that having from a vain report chosen *Christ* to be their *Master*, they did for his sake foolishly undervalue and throw away all the enjoyments and advantages of this World. Amongst us (says *Tatian*) Orat. cont. Gra. p. 167 there is no affectation of *vain glory*, no *diversity* of Sentiments and Opinions, but separating our selves from all vulgar and earthly thoughts and discourses, and having given up our selves to the Commands of God to be govern'd by his Law, we abandon whatever seems but a-kin to Humane Glory. They never met with opportunities to have advantaged and enriched themselves, but they declined and turned them off with a noble scorn. When *Abgarus* the *Toparch* of *Edeffa* offered *Thaddens* (one of the Seventy Disciples) great Summs of Gold and Silver for the pains he had taken, and the great things he had done amongst them, he refused them with this Answer, *To what purpose should we receive good things from others, who have freely forsaken and renounced our own?* As indeed, in those times Friends and Relations, Houses and Lands were

Euseb. Hist.
Eccl. lib. 1.
c. 15. p. 35.

24 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.**

Part 2. chearfully parted with, when they stood in Competition with Christ; they could content themselves with the most naked poverty, so it might but consist with the profession of the Gospel.

*Martyr. e-
jus apud
Sur. ad
diem 5. Feb.
tom. 1. ex
S. Metaph.*

When *Quintianus* the President under *Decius* the Emperor, asked *Agatha* the Virgin-Martyr, why being descended of such Rich and *Illustrious* Parents, she would stoop to such low and mean Offices as she took upon her; She presently answered him, *Our Glory and Nobility lies in this, that we are the Servants of Christ.* To the same purpose was the answer of *Quintinus* the Martyr under the *Dioclesian* Persecution, when the President asked him how it came about, that he being a *Roman* Citizen, and the Son of a *Senator*, would truckle under such a *Superstition*, and worship him for a *God*, whom the *Jews* had *Crucified*? The Martyr told him, That it was the highest Honor and Nobility to know and serve God: that the Christian Religion, which he call'd *Superstition*, ought not to be traduc'd with so base a name, seeing it immediately guided its followers to the highest degrees of happiness; for here-
in

*Apud Sur.
ad 31 Oct.
com. 5.*

Ch.2. Primitive Christianity. 25

in it is that the Omnipotent God is re- Part 2.
vealed, the great Creator of Heaven
and Earth, and his Son *Jesus Christ* our
Lord, by whom all things were made,
and who is in all things equal to his Fa-
ther.

The simplicity of Christians then
kept them from aspiring after Honour
and Greatness, and if at any time ad-
vanced to it, their great Care was to
keep themselves unspotted from the
World; as *Nazianzen* reports of his
Brother *Casarius*, Chief Physician to the
Emperor *Constantius*, that though he
was very dear to him (as he was to the
whole Court) and advanced by him
every day to greater Honors and Dig-
nities, yet *this* (says he) *was the chief of*
all, that he suffered not the Nobility of
his Soul to be corrupted by that Glory,
and those delights that were round a-
bout him: But accounted this his
chiefest honor, that he was a *Christian*;
in comparision of which all things else
were to him but as a Sport and *Pagean-
try*: He looked upon other things but
as *Comick Scenes*, soon up, and as soon
over; but upon *Piety* as the most safe
and permanent good, and which we
can properly call our own, regarding
that

In laud.
Casari. frat.
Orat. 10.
p. 166.

26 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. that piety especially which is most inward and unseen to the world.

In land.
Gorgon.
Orat. II.
p. 183.

The like he relates of his Sister *Gorgonia*, as the perfection of her excellent temper, that she did not more *seem* to be good, than she did really *strive* to be so; peculiarly conversant in those secret Acts of piety which are visible only to him, who sees what is *hidden and secret*; to the Prince of this world she left nothing, transferring all into those safe and Cœlestial Treasuries that are above; she left nothing to the earth but her Body, changing all things for the hopes of a better life; bequeathing no other *Riches* to her children, but an excellent *Pattern*, and a desire to follow her Example. The truth is, as to Estate, they were not concern'd for more than what would supply the *Necessities* of Nature, or the *Wants* of others, not solicitous to get or possess such revenues as might make them the objects either of mens *envy*, or their *fear*; as may appear amongst others by this instance.

Exch. lib.
3. c. 20.
p. 89.

Domitian the Emperor being inform'd that there were yet remaining some of Christ's *Kindred according to the Flesh* (the Nephews of *Judas* the Brother

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 27

Brother of our Lord, of the Race and Part 2.
Posterity of *David*, which the Emperor sought utterly to extirpate) he sent for them, enquired of them whether they were of the *Line of David*? They answered they were: He asked what Possessions and *Estate* they had? they told him they had between them *thirty nine Acres of Land* (to the value of about *nine thousand pence*) out of the fruits whereof they both paid him *Tribute*, and *maintained* themselves with their own hard labor, whereto the *Hardness* and *callousness* of their hands (which they then shew'd him) bore witness: He then ask'd them concerning *Christ* and the state of his *Kingdom*; to which they answered, that his *Empire was not of this World*, but Heavenly and Evangelical, and which should finally take place in the end of the world, when he should come *with Glory* to judge both the quick and the dead, and to reward men according to their Works: Which when he heard, despising the men upon the account of their meanness, he let them go without any severity against them. Of *Origen* Id. lib. 6. c. 3. p. 205. we read that he was so great a despiser of the world, that when he might have liv'd

28 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. liv'd upon the maintenance of others, he would not, but parted with his *Library* of Books to one that was to allow him only *four oboli* a day ; the day he spent in laborious Tasks and Exercises, and the greatest part of the Night in Study ; he always remembred that Precept of our Saviour, *Not to have two Coats, not to wear Shoes, not anxiously to take Care for to morrow*, nor would he accept the kindness of others, when they would freely have given him some part of their estate to live on.

Not that the Christians of those times thought it *unlawful* to possess Estates, or to use the Blessings of Divine Providence ; for though in those times of Persecution they were often forc'd to quit their estates and habitations, yet did they preserve their *Proprieties* entire, and industriously mind the *necessary* Conveniencies of this Life, so far as was *consistent* with their Care of a better. There were indeed a sort of Christians call'd *Apostolici*, who in a fond imitation of the *Apostles*, left all they had, and gave up themselves to a voluntary poverty, holding it not lawful to possess any thing : hence they were also call'd *Apotactici*, or *Renouncers*,
because

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 29

because they quitted and renounc'd Part 2.
whatsoever they had ; but they were
ever accounted infamous *Hereticks* :

They were, as *Epiphanius* tells us, the
Descendants of *Tatian*, part of the old
Cathari and *Encratitæ*: together with
whom they are put in a Law of the
Emperor *Theodosius*, and reckon'd a-
mongst the vilest of the *Manichean*
Hereticks; mentioned also by *Julian*
the *Apostate*, as a Branch of the *Galile-*
ans, as he calls the Christians, by him
compar'd to the *Cynic Philosophers* a-
mongst the Heathens, for the neglect-
ing of their Country, the abandoning
of their Estates and Goods, and their
loose and rambling course of Life; only
herein different, that they did not as
those *Galilean Apotactiste*, run up and
down under a pretence of Poverty to
beg Alms. The Truth is, by the ac-
count which both he and *Epiphanius*
give of them, they seem to have been
the very *Patriarchs*, and primitive foun-
ders of those *Mendicant Orders*, and
professors of *vowed Poverty*, which
swarm so much in the Church of *Rome*
at this day. But to return ; The *Chri-*
stians of those days did not study
those Arts of *Splendor* and *Gallantry*
which

Contr. Apo-
stolic. He-
ref. 61. pag.
220.
Cod. The-
od. lib. 16.
tit. 5. de
Heret. l. 7.
De Synic.
Sess. Orat.
7. p. 417.

30 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. which have since over-run the World, stately Palaces, costly Furniture, rich Hangings, fine Tables, curious Beds, vessels of Gold and Silver, the very possession of which (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks) creates envy; they are rare to get, hard to keep, and it may be not so accommodate to use. Will not a Knife cut as well (*says he*) though it have not an *Ivory-haft*, or be not garnished with Silver, or an *earthen* Basson serve to wash the Hands? Will not the *Table* hold our Provisions, unless its Feet be made of *Ivory*? Or the *Lamp* give its *light* although made by a *Potter*, as well as if 'twere the work of the *Goldsmith*? May not a man sleep as well upon a *mean* Couch, as upon a Bed of *Ivory*? Upon a *Goats Skin*, as well as upon a *Purple* or *Phœnician* carpet? Our *Lord* ate his meat out of a *common* Dish, and made his followers sit upon the *grass*, and *washed* his Disciples Feet, without ever fetching down a *silver* Bowl from Heaven; he took the water which the *Samaritanes* had drawn in an *Earthen Pitcher*, not requiring one of Gold, shewing how easie it was to quench his Thirst; for he respected the *use*, not the vain and superfluous State of things.

This

Pedag.lib.

2. c. 3. p.

160, 161.

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 31

This and much more he there urges to Part 2. this excellent purpose, to let us see how little a Christian need be beholden to the World, if he be content with what's enough for the necessary uses of humane Life.

To this let me annex some part of that discourse which *Gregory Nyssen* has upon this Subject: The fluid and transitory condition of man's Life (*says he*) calls for a daily *Reparation* of the decays of Nature: He therefore that looks no farther than to minister to the desires of Nature, and troubles not himself with vain anxious thoughts for more than's necessary, lives little less than the Life of Angels, whilst by a mind content with little he imitates their want of nothing. For this cause we are commanded to seek only what's enough to keep the Body in its due state and temper, and thus to address our Prayers to God, *Give us our daily bread: Give us Bread, not Delicacies or Riches, not splendid and purple Vestures, or Rich Golden Ornaments, not Pearls and Jewels, Silver Vessells, large Fields and great Possessions, not the government of Armies, the Conduct of Wars, and disposal of Nations, not numerous*

De Orat.

Domin.

Orat. 5.p.

745.tom.

1. Vid.

Cypr. de O-

rat. Dom.

p. 192.

32 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. merous *Flocks* and Herds of Cattel, or multitudes of *Slaves* and Servants, not Splendor and Gallantry in Publick, not Marble *Pillars*, or *Brazen* Statues, or Silken *Carpets*, or *Quires* of *Musick*, or any of those things by which the Soul is diverted, and drawn from more *Noble* and *Divine* thoughts and cares: But only *Bread*, which indeed is the true and common Staff of man's Life.

Minut. F.
p. 10. vid.
Constit.
Apostol. lib.
2. c. 62.
p. 886.

Nor were they more studious of *pleasures* and recreations *abroad*, than they were of fineness and bravery at *home*: They went not to publick *Feasts*, nor frequented the *shews* that were made for the Disport and Entertainment of the People: and this was so notorious, that the Heathens charg'd it upon them as part of their *Crime*. Observe how he in *Minutius Felix* draws it up; The *Romans* (*says he*) govern and enjoy the World, while *you* in the mean time are careful and *mopish*, abstaining even from *lawful Pleasures*; you visit not the *Shews*, nor are present at the *Pomps*, nor frequent the *publick Feasts*; you abhor the holy *Games*, the sacrificial *Meats* and *Drinks*, crown not your Heads with *Garlands*, nor perfume your Bodies with sweet Odors; a ghastly, fearful

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 33

fearful and miserable People! which by Part 2.

that time that *Octavius* the Christian comes to answer, he grants it all to be Pag. 30.

true, and tells him there was very good reason why they should abstain from their Shews, Poms and Divertisements;

at which they could not be present without great Sin and Shame, without affronting their modesty, and offering

a Distast and Horror to their Minds; and indeed they reckon'd themselves

particularly oblig'd to this by what they had vowed and undertaken at

their Baptism, when they solemnly engaged to *renounce the Devil and all his*

works, poms and pleasures, i. e. (says St. Cyril) the fights and sports of the Theatre, and such like *vanities*.

The truth is, they look'd upon the publick sports and pastimes of those days as the

Scenes not only of *Folly* and *Lewdness*, but of great *Impiety* and *Idolatry*; as

places where the *Devil* eminently rul'd, and reckon'd all his *Votaries* that came

thither. Accordingly *Tertullian* tells us of a *Christian Woman* who going to

the Theatre, was there possessed by the Devil; and when the Evil Spirit at his

casting out was ask'd, how he durst set upon a Christian? He presently answer-

ed,

Catech.
Myth. 1. p.
310.

De spect.
c. 26. p. 82.

34 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. ed, *I did but what was fit and just, for I found her upon my own ground.*

*Athen. leg.
pro Christi.
p. 2.*

Being thus affected towards the World, they could very willingly part with any thing that was dearest to them, *Friends, Estate, Liberty, or Life* it self. We are not mov'd (*says one of their Apologists*) with the Loss of our *Estates* which our Enemies wrest from us, nor with the *Violence* that's offer'd to our *credit* and reputation, or if there be any thing of greater concernment than these; for although these things are mightily priz'd and valued amongst men, yet can we despise and sleight them: nay, we cannot only when *beaten*, refrain from striking again, and make no *resistance* against those that invade and spoil us; but to them that *smite one Cheek we can turn the other, and to them that take away the Coat, we can let them take the Cloak* also. And I remember *Nazianzen* tells us, that of those Excellencies and Endowments which God had given him, *health, wealth, esteem and eloquence*, he reaped this only Benefit, that he had something which he could *contemn*, and by which he could shew that he infinitely valued *Christ* before them. The greatest

*Orat. 1. p.
32.*

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 35

est endearment of this life is *Relations*, Part 2.
 and yet these too they could quietly
 resign when God called for them: Me-
 morable it is what St. *Hierom* reports *Ad Paul.*
 of *Melania* (a Lady of great Piety in *tom. 1. p.*
 his time, in whose commendation *Paulinus* *160.*
 Bishop of *Nola* spends a very large
 Epistle, especially commending her for
 her *generous* and heroick mind, *tam vi-*
riliter Christiana, that she was some-
 thing above a Woman, and had the *Epist. l. 2.*
Masculine Spirit of a Christian: of this *Epist. 2.*
 Lady St. *Hierom* tells us) that her *Hus-*
band lying dead by her, she lost *two* of
 her *Sons* at the same time; and when
 every one expected that she should
 break out into a violent Passion, tear
 her Hair, rent her Garments, and burst
 into Tears; she stood still, and at last
 falling down, as 'twere at the Feet of
Christ, broke out into this pious and
 Christian Resentment, *Lord, I shall serve*
thee more nimbly and readily, by being
eased of the weight thou hast taken from
me. Nay, so little kindness had they
 for this World, that they cared not how
 little they stayed in it, and therefore
 readily offered themselves to *Martyr-*
dom at every turn. *Tertullian* tells his *Apol. c. 4.*
 Adversaries, that all those Plagues *p. 33.*

36 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. which God sent upon the world, what damage soever they might do their Enemies, could not hurt them, because they had no other Concernment in this World, than *as soon* as they could to *get out* of it. This he elsewhere tells us, the very *Gentiles* assign'd as one reason, why the Christians were train'd up in a defiance of all the sports and pleasures of this Life, that they might be more willing to die; and that the cords being cut by which they were tedder'd to this World, they might be more nimble and expedite for their passage hence. Their main designs were intent upon the happiness of another World, and therefore they regarded not what they went through to come sooner to it. Being inflamed (says *Justin Martyr*) with the desire of a pure and an *eternal* Life, we breath after an *intimate* converse with God the great Parent and Creator of the World, and make haste to *seal* our confession with our *Blood*; being certainly perswaded that they shall attain to this state, who by their actions study to approve themselves to God that they follow after him, and are heartily desirous of communion with him in that Life, where

no

De Spect.

c. 1. p. 73.

Apol. 2. p.

57.

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 37

no malice or wickedness shall take Part 2.
place. This was the mighty support
they lean'd upon, the great Cordial
with which they kept up their Spirits
in those sad times of suffering and per-
secution, the firm *belief* and expectati-
on which they had of enjoying God
in a better Life. They knew, that the
more haste their Enemies made to *break*
open the cage of their bodies, the sooner
their souls would be at liberty to *fly* to
the Regions of Blessedness and Immor-
tality. And indeed so much were their
thoughts fixed upon this, so oft did they
use to comfort one another by discour-
sing of that *Kingdom* which they ex-
pected hereafter, that some of their
Enemies over-hearing and mistaking
them, accused them as *treasonable affe-*
ctors of the *Empire*: when alas, (as *Ju-*
stin Martyr assures the *Emperors*) they
meant nothing less; which they might ib. p. 58.
know by this, that being brought to
tryal, they freely confessed themselves
to be Christians, though they certain-
ly knew they must die for it: whereas
(*says he*) did we expect an *Humane*
Kingdom, we would dissemble and
deny it, and avoid death, and so expect
a more convenient season to accomplish

38 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 2. our designs ; but since our hopes are not placed in any thing in this world, we regard not those that take away our lives, well knowing they take nothing from us, but what we must needs lay down our selves. It was their care then continually to *keep company* with *dying* thoughts, and to dwell within the prospect of Eternity ; it being generally true of all what *S. Hierom* particularly reports of *Marcella*, that she *lived* so, as always believing that she should immediately *die*, and never put on her *Garments*, but it put her in mind of her *Grave*, and of the *Sheet* that should wrap her up in the *House of silence*.

*Epitaph.
Marcell.
ad Princip.
p. 119.*

But besides the influence which the expectation of their particular *Dissolutions* had upon them, there was one thing which I doubt not did mightily contribute to their being *mean'd* from the World, and did strongly animate them to a quick and speedy diligence about the affairs of the other life, and that was, the *Opinion* they generally had of the *Day of Judgment being near at hand*. An *Opinion* started early, as appears by that *Caution* which *S. Paul* gives the *Thessalonians* about it ; and it lasted

*2 Thes. 2.
3, 4.*

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 39

lasted for some Ages after, as is evident Part 2.
 from several passages in *Tertullian*, who *Vid. de cult. sæmin. lib. 2. c. 9. ad uxor. lib. 1. c. 5.*
 always improves it to this purpose, that men should not unnecessarily encumber themselves with the Affairs of this life, but carry themselves as those that were immediately passing hence. I conclude with that of *Justin Martyr*, Christians (*says he*) dwell in their own Countreys but as *Inmates* and *Foreigners*; they have all things common with other men as *Fellow-Citizens*, and yet suffer all things as *Strangers* and *Foreigners*: Every *Foreign Region* is their *Country*, and every *Country* is *Foreign* to them: They marry like other men, and beget Children, but do not expose or neglect their Off-spring; they feast in common, but do not exceed like other men; they are in the *Flesh*, but do not live after the *Flesh*; dwell upon *Earth*, but their *Conversation is in Heaven*. Therefore he compares Christians in this World to the *Soul* in the *Body*, as for other reasons, so especially for this, that as the *Soul* lives in the *Body*, but is not of the *Body*, so Christians dwell in the world, but are not of the world; an *immortal spirit* dwells in a *mortal Tabernacle*, and Christians,

Epist. ad Diognet. p. 497.

40 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.**

Part 2. while they sojourn in these *corruptible* Mansions, expect and look for an *incorruptible* state in Heaven.

C H A P. III.

Of their Sobriety, in respect of their Garb and Apparel.

Much of the temper of the mind shewn in the outward Garb. The great ends of Clothes, for Honesty, Necessity, Distinction. The Primitive Christians accommodated themselves to these. Careful to avoid both singularity and excess. Generally conformable to the sober fashions of the places where they lived. Whether when they turn'd Christian, they left off the Roman Gown, and took up the Pallium or Cloak; à Toga ad Pallium. The occasion of Tertullian's writing his excellent Book on that Subject. The Pallium principally worn by those that entred upon a Life of more than ordinary strictness. Their great care to keep a medium between costliness and sordidness. This accounted part of that pomp and vanity which they

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 41

they renounced in Baptism. The va- Part 2.
nity of excessive garbs and finery com-
plain'd of by the Fathers in some of
those times. Especially invective a-
gainst Methods of artificial Beauty;
what pleaded in defence of it by some
persons in those days considered and
answered out of the Fathers. That
they were rich, no sufficient Argument
to patronize the doing of it. Better
ways of employing their Estates. Nor
that they could do it without violating
their Chastity. The inconveniencies of
it with respect to others. That they
did it to please their Husbands. An-
swered this needless: every wise and
good man content without it. Such
Arts savour'd too much of lewd wanton
Prostitutes. Painting and such Arts
injurious to God, and a Disparagement
of his workmanship. This largely pro-
secuted out of Tertullian and Cy-
prius. A memorable Story which
Theodoret relates of his own Mother.
True beauty accounted to lie in a holy
and vertuous mind, and a pure and
pious Life. Gay and phantastick per-
sons fitly represented by the Ægyptian
Temples. Nazianzen's description of
his good Sister Gorgonia.

The

42 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.**
Part 2.

THe Primitive Christians being thus eminent for their Contempt of the World, 'tis easie to imagine that they were very *temperate* and *abstemious* in the use of all the pleasures and conveniencies of humane Life, which we shall more particularly consider in these three instances, their *Sobriety* in respect of *Garb* and *Apparel*, their *Temperance* in regard of *Food* and *diet*, and their *Continence* or *Chastity*.

For the first, the *care* about our *Garb* and *Dress*, it is one of those Instances of *Sobriety* which are to be conducted by the Rules of Religion and Reason, and which very much discover a virtuous or a vitious temper: *There are three things* (as the Son of Syrach well observes) *that shew a man what he is, his Attire, excessive Laughter, and his Gate*: There is not certainly a more open evidence of a *vain mind*, than a *vain Garb* and *Habit*. St. Basil discoursing what Habit does best beseem a *Christian*, tells us in general, that it ought to be such as most lively expresses the meekness and humility of the mind, that good men of old were so attired, and that we are commanded, *having Food and Rai-*
ment

Reg. fus.
disput. in-
terrog. 22.
p. 566.
tom. 2.

Ch.3. Primitibe Christianity. 43

ment to be therewith content ; not stu- Part 2.
dying *Variety*, and which most com-
monly follows it, *softness and elegancy*,
which are but Instruments to minister
to excess and luxury, introduced into
humane life through the idle and un-
necessary Arts of looseness and effemi-
nacy. 'Tis not enough (says *Tertulli-* *De cultu*
an) that a Christian be chaste and mo- *fæmin lib.*
dest, but he must appear to be so? a ver- *2. c. 13.*
tue of which he should have so great a *p. 160.*
store and treasure, that it should flow
from his *mind* upon his *habit*, and break
from the Retirements of his *Conscience*
into the *superficies* of his *Life*, as he
there expresses it. More particularly
St. *Basil* tells us, That the habit of a *ib. p. 567.*
Christian ought to be suitable to the
two great *Ends* of Clothing instituted
by God, viz. *Honesty* and *Necessity*; *Ho-*
nesty to hide the less comly parts of the
body, and to cover that Shame which
Sin has brought upon mankind: in Pa-
radise *Innocency* was Man's only *Robe*,
'twas Sin brought in the *Fig-leav'd Coat*,
and what should more induce us to be
modest in our Apparel, than to remem-
ber, that our Cloaths are *Monitors* of
our Apostasie, and that there's little
reason we should *pride* our selves in
that

44 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. that which is only a cover for our *Shame? Necessity*, and so Cloaths were designed to keep the Body in convenient warmth, and to defend it from those Injuries and Extremities of the Air and Weather, which would otherwise soon rot down this House of Clay.

Vid. Cyril. ad illuminat. Catec. 4. p. 49. Now to both these ends (he tells us) we ought to accommodate our Garments, not striving for variety, having some for uses at home, others for ostentation when we go abroad, but that whatever attains these ends is enough.

Pedag. lib. 3. c. 11. p. 245. But besides these, there is a third *Use and End* of Cloaths noted by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and that is for *Distinction*, not only of *Sexes*, but of different *ranks* and degrees of men, such as agree best to mens *age, persons, shape, nature*, or their several *States and Employments*; in these respects men may use different and distinguishing Habits: Nay, he grants, that in some cases men may recede from the strict rule and discipline of this affair, and that such women as cannot otherwise gain upon their Husbands may (if they require it) go a little more *trim* and neat, provided (as he there limits it) it be done *only* to please and gain upon their husbands, and

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 45

and that they do not practise any Artifices of unlawful beauty. Part 2.

Now that the *Ancient Christians* govern'd themselves by these rules in this affair is plain, in that they avoided both *singularity* on the one hand, and *excess* on the other, generally conforming themselves to the *decent* and *orderly* Customs and Fashions of the Times and Places where they liv'd. *Justin* Epist. ad Diogn. p. 496. giving his friend an account of the Christians, tells him, that they differ'd not from other men, either in their *Country*, or *Speech*, or the *Usages* of the civil life; they dwell in their own Cities, use the same Language with other men, nor have they any singular and extraordinary way of Life; they are not in any thing affected or phantastick; but inhabiting partly amongst *Greeks*, partly in *barbarous* Cities, as every one's Lot is fallen, they follow the Customs of their Countrey; and both in cloaths and diet, and all other affairs of outward Life, shew the excellent and admirable Constitution of their discipline and conversation. I am not ignorant of what some learned men would have us to believe, that in those times when any turn'd from *Paganism*

46 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. to *Christianity*, they were wont to *change* their *habit*, to leave off the *Toga* or *Gown* (the common habit almost in all parts of the *Roman* Empire) and to take up the *Pallium* or *Cloak*: and this they think sufficiently countenanc'd by the instance of *Tertullian*, who laying aside the *Gown*, and putting on the *Cloak*, was accused of *Lightness* and *Inconstancy* by the People of *Carthage*, and bitterly persecuted with the common *Sarcasm*, à *Toga ad Pallium*, as one that had wantonly skipp'd from the *Gown* to the *Cloak*, *i. e.* from one profession to another; insomuch that he was forc'd to write an *Apology* for himself, which he did in his Book *de Pallio*, where with a great deal of satyrical and sarcastick Wit he retorts upon them, and vindicates himself from their charge and cavils. But that there was any such *change* of habit at persons first coming over to *Christianity*, I can see no reason to believe; and for the Case of *Tertullian* it makes nothing to the purpose, unless it could be prov'd that he left off the *Gown* at his first entrance upon the *Christian* Religion, which will be hard to make out; for I am clearly of the mind of the learned

Salma.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 47

Salmasius, that he altered his habit, and Part 2.
 assumed the *Cloak* not when he first be- Præfat. in
 Comment.
 Tertul. de
 Pallio.
 came *Christian*, but when he was made Tertull. de
 Pall. c. 4.
 Vid. Tert.
 ex edit. B.
 Rhenani,
 p. 620. vid.
 etiam
 Salm. in
 loc.
Presbyter of the Church of *Carthage* ;
 whence it is called by him according
 to his dialect *Sacerdos habitus* (for so it
 is in all ancient *Manuscripts*, and in the
 first *Edition* of *B. Rhenanus*, and not *sacer
 habitus*, as later Editions have it)
 the *Priests Habit* ; because the *Christian
 Priests* usually wore it after their en-
 trance upon Holy Orders. For the bet-
 ter understanding of which, we are to
 consider a little, that amongst the
Greeks the *Philosophick Pallium* or *Cloak*
 was not commonly worn, but was the
 proper habit of *Philosophers*, who pro-
 fess'd a more severe and accurate course
 of life. Accordingly amongst the *Christi-
 ans* those who professed themselves to
 be *ασκηται*, the more *strict* and *exact* ob-
 servers of the *Christian discipline*, whe-
 ther they were *Laity* or *Clergy*, assumed
 this habit to themselves ; and because the
Clergy in those times generally took
 upon them this austere and philoso-
 phick way of Life, this Garb was most
 peculiar to them ; and this probably
 they did the rather, not only because
 this was the most plain and simple Gar-
 ment

48 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. ment in it self, but because they supposed the *Apostles* (whom they strove to imitate) wore this habit, as is plain they did as from other passages in the *New Testament* so from *St. Pauls* sending for the *Cloak which he left at Troas*: therefore the Author of the *Apostolical History*, who shelters himself under the name of *Abdias Babylonius*, certainly forgot himself, when describing the habit of *St. Bartholomew the Apostle*, he made it so trim and fine. *Vestitus* (says he) *Colore* (doubtless it should be *Colobio*) *albo*, &c. *he was cloathed in a white Coat, beset with Studs of Purple, over which he had a white Cloak, having purple Gems at each Corner of it; a piece of gallantry unknown to the plainness of those times, and unsuitable to the profession of that Holy man.* Indeed, as plenty and prosperity began to flow in upon the Church, this simple and modest garment was laid aside, and the Clergy took upon them a more rich and splendid garb; insomuch that when *Eustathius* Bishop of *Sebastia* took upon him to wear the *Philosophick Cloak*, and perswaded his Followers also to use it, he was for this very reason deposed by his own Father *Eulalius*, Bishop

Lib. 8. fol.
96. p. 2.

Socrat.
Hist. Eccl.
lib. 2. c. 43.
p. 156. vid.
Concil.
Gangr.
Can. 12.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 49

Bishop of *Cesarea*, because wearing a Part 2. habit unsuitable to the Ministerial Order, which sentence was not long after ratified by the Synod of *Gangra*, and a Canon made against it.

From what has been said it may appear, that although the *Clergy*, and such as entred upon a more strict and *ascetic* course of life had a habit peculiar to themselves; yet the generality of Christians differed not from the *common* Garb. They were indeed exceeding careful to avoid all such as favoured of *costliness* and *finery*, choosing such as expressed the greatest lowliness and innocency. The Garment that we should wear (says *Clemens of Alexandria*) ought to be mean and frugal, not *curiously* wrought with divers colours (the Emblem of *Craftiness* and *Deceit*) but *white*, to denote our embracing and professing *simplicity* and truth; our outward Cloathing is an indication of the temper of our manners: that's true simplicity of Habit, which takes away what's vain and superfluous; that the best and most solid Garment, which is furthest from art and curiosity, and most apt to preserve and keep warm the Body. St. *Cyprian* ever observ'd a

*Ib. ubi
supr. p.
244.*

*Pont. dicit
in vit. Cyp.
p. 12.*

D

due

50 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. due *decorum* in his Garb as well as his Countenance; his Aspect was *grave* and yet *chearful*; neither a frowning *Severity*, nor an over-pleasant *Merriness*, but such a happy mixture of both, that it was hard to say, whether he was more to be *fear'd* or *lov'd*, but that he equally deserv'd both: and just such was his Garb, sober and moderate, keeping a just distance both from *Slovenliness* and *Superfluity*; it neither argu'd him to be swell'd with Pride, nor infected with a miserable and sordid Mind. *Chrysostome* amongst other things especially commends *Olympias* (a woman of great Birth and Estate, and of no less Piety) for the incredible modesty and meanness of her attire, not much better than that of the poorest Beggar; having nothing in her garb or gate that was *feigned* or *gandy*, nothing elaborate or artificial; (which things *says he*) were the Colors, the bright and beautiful representations of her virtue, whereby that Wisdom and *divine* Philosophy that lay hidden in her mind, was externally painted and shadowed out. So far were they then from the vanity and affection of Pomp and Bravery, of dazling the Eye with rich costly

Ad Olymp.

Ep. 2. tom.

4. p. 617.

& 623.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 51

costly Ornaments, that they thought Part 2.
they could never seem mean enough,
and this they look'd upon themselves
as especially bound to by the *promise*
which they had made at *Baptism*, when
they *renounc'd* the *Devil*, and his whole
pomp and *service*, (as the same *Father*
elsewhere informs us.

Hom. 21.
ad pop. An-
tioch. tom.
1. p. 244.

It cannot be denied, but that the Fa-
thers frequently complain of, and smart-
ly declaim against the vanity and folly
of some in those times (women espe-
cially, by the *weakness* of their Sex more
propense to the excesses of Pride and
Superfluity) who gave up themselves
to all the arts of fineness and gallantry,
and out of an Emulation to the
Heathen Ladies amongst whom they
lived, they affected all manner of
pomp and *elegancy*, striving to be as rich
and gaudy, not as they *ought*, but as
they *could* make themselves; whose
excessive Prodigality *Tertullian* does
thus not less *elegantly* than *sarcastically*
describe: A great Estate (*says he*) is
drawn out of a *little Pocket*; it's no-
thing to expend * *many thousand pounds*
upon one string of *pearls*, a weak tender
neck can make a shift to carry about
whole Woods and Lordships; vast Sums

De Cult.
Fœm. lib. 1.
c. 8. p. 153.
* In the
Lat. *decies*
sestertium,
which in
our mo-
ney is se-
venty
eight
thousand
one hun-
dred and
twelve
pounds
ten shil-
lings.

52 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. of money borrowed of the *Banker*, and noted in his Account-book to be repay'd every month with Interest, are weigh'd at the *beam* of a thin slender ear; So great is the strength of Pride and Ambition, that even the *weak* feeble body of one woman shall be able to carry the *weight* and substance of so many pounds taken up at *Usury*. This was look'd upon as a very great Sin. *Clemens Alexandrinus* censures it very deep; that though gluttony and intemperance be great vices, yet not to be compar'd with a *nice*, *over-curious* study of fineness and bravery: I suppose he means in respect of its insatiable and unbounded nature. For so he adds; A well furnish'd table, and cups that go round, may quickly stop the mouth of a hungry Stomach; but where there is a nice affectation of *Bravery*, of *Gold*, *Purple*, or *Jewels*, there not the treasures of the *Creation*, not what's *above*, or *under ground*, not the spoils of the *Tyrian Sea*, not the fraughts from *India*, or *Ethiopia*, no nor *Pactolus* with his golden Streams would suffice. Nay, such persons, though as rich as *Midas*, would not yet think themselves rich or fine enough. But that which the Fathers

Pædag.
lib. 3. c. 2.
p. 219.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 53

thers do most severely censure and cry Part 2.
 out against, is not only the *expence* and
 costliness of their cloths and jewels, but
 the *Arts* which they used to add
greater Beauty (and Handsomness to
 themselves,) than God and Nature had
 bestowed upon them. This it seems
 the pride and folly of some Christian
 Women had arrived to, which the zeal
 and piety of those times did vehement-
 ly condemn and protest against. It
 may not be amiss to consider, what the
Gallants of those times *pleaded* for
 themselves, and what was returned in
answer to them. Sometimes they plead-
 ed, that they were rich, and had great
 Estates, and ought therefore to live
like themselves, and to make use of the
 Estates that God had given them. To
 this *Cyprian* answers, that they only are
truly rich, that are rich *in and towards*
 God; that the world ought to be de-
spised, the *Pomps* and *Delights* whereof
 we then *renounc'd*, when we happily
 turn'd to God, with the *love* of whom
all that is in the World, the Lust of the
Flesh, the lust of the Eye, and the pride of
Life is not consistent; that the use of
 riches in this case is to be governed by
 just and moderate measures: the Apo-

*De discipl.
 & habit.
 virgin. p.
 164.*

54 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. *He commanding all Women how rich soever, To adorn themselves in modest Apparel, with shamefac'dness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold or pearls, or costly array; but (which becomes Women professing Godliness) with good Works. S. Peter also requiring of them not the outward adorning of Gold or fine Apparel, but the hidden ornament of the Heart; that though they were rich, yet they were to consult the honor and modesty of their profession, and might not go to the utmost bounds of what was lawful, some things being lawful, which were not expedient, especially when by their wanton and lascivious dress they might be a means to kindle in the Breasts of others the flames of an unchast and unlawful passion, and so prove the occasion of their ruine; that if they thought themselves bound to use the Estate that God had given them, God hath shewn them a more excellent way to relieve the hungry, and feed the poor Members of Christ, that this was the best art of improving Riches, and the way to lay them up in safe and unfailing Treasuries, where we may be sure to reap the fruit of them another day, and not to throw them away*

Vid. Confit. Apost. lib. 1. c. 3. p. 804.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 55

away upon arts of Beauty, upon vain Part 2.
and phantastick dressees. This is the sum
of that good man's reasonings in the
case.

Sometimes they pleaded, that they
might beautifie and Honor the Bo-
dy without any danger of violating
their *Chastity*, or setting open the case-
ment for Luxury to fly in upon them.
Tertullian answers, Let them that had
a mind to't glory in the *Flesh*, that for
us we have no designs of glory, partly
as being highly unsuitable to us, who
by the law of God are under the profes-
sion of *Humility*; partly because all
Glory (to us especially) is vain and
swelling, how much more that which
arises from the *Flesh*; if we must glory
'tis much fitter for us who follow *Spi-*
ritual things to please our selves in the
excellencies of the *Spirit* than in those
of the *Flesh*; let us rejoyce in those
things about which we are employed,
and seek *glory* from those things, from
which we hope for *Salvation*. A Chri-
stian may indeed *glory* in the flesh, but
it is when for the sake of *Christ* it is
torn in pieces that the *spirit* may be
crowned, not that it may prove a snare
to attract the eyes and sights of young

*De cult.
fæmin. lib.
2. c. 3. p.
155.*

56 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. mens ungovernable Passions after it; then when 'tis tormented for 'confessing the *Christian* name, when a *woman* is found stronger than the *Men* that torment her, when she suffers *fires*, or *crosses*, or *swords*, or *wild Beasts*, that she may receive the *Crown*; these (says *Cyprian*) are the pretious *jewels* of the flesh, these the much better *Ornaments* of the *body*. So that (as *Tertullian* goes on) Beauty being altogether so unuseful to us, ought to be *despised* by them that want it, and to be *neglected* by them that *have* it: a good Woman that's content with her own Native Beauty, has not that occasion to betray her to lust and folly; and if she had, it would become her, not to *promote*, but *hinder* it. Sometimes again, they pretended, they did it only to *please* their *Husbands*, and that they might appear more *lovely* and *acceptable* to them: to which Plea, as being most specious and plausible, I observe especially *Three* things return'd by way of answer.

ut supr.
p. 163.

Tert. Ib.
c. 4.

Id. ibid.

First, That to design the pleasing of their *Husbands* by such Arts as these, was altogether *needleß*, seeing every wise and good man cannot but like his wife

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 57

wife best without them. No wife (says Part 2. Tertullian) can seem *deformed* to her own Husband, who doubtless was well enough pleased with her, either for her *temper*, or her *Beauty* when he first made choice of her: Let none fear their Husbands will more distaste and dislike them for abstaining from *artificial* compositions, for every husband is a rigid exacter of his wives chastity; and consequently they can be of no advantage to this end, whether he be a *believing*, or an *unbelieving* Husband, a *Gentile*, or a *Christian*: If a *Christian*, then he will not require any such *foreign* beauty as not being taken with those accomplishments which the Gentiles do account so; if a *Gentile*, then according to that vile opinion which they have of us *Christians*, let her do what she can, he will suspect her to be naught: For whose sake therefore should she so curiously dress, so delicately nurse and nourish up her beauty: for a *believing* Husband? he requires it not; for an *Infidel*? he'll never believe it to be true; why then should she so much desire to please either one that *suspects* it, or one that does not desire it?

Second-

58 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. Secondly, That these loose delicate Arts came too near the practice of lewd wanton *Prostitutes*, who made use of these ways and tricks for no other end but to *enveagle* men into their embraces: The bravery of Ornaments and Apparel, and the additional Enticements of Beauty are chiefly used (as *Cyprian* tells them) by Prostitutes and unchaste Women; and that no womens Garb is more rich and gaudy, than theirs whose modesty is most vile and cheap. And this he tells us the Scripture shadows out by the *Woman that was arrayed in purple and scarlet-colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden Cup in her hand, full of Abominations and Filthiness of her Fornication*: But chaste and modest Virgins shun the dresses of the defiled, the habit of the Shameless, the Badges of the Stewes, the Ornaments of Light wanton Women. Whereas all other Creatures (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) birds and beasts are content with their own natural beauty and colours; woman only as if she were inferiour to the Beasts, thinks her self so deform'd as that there's need to repair the defect by external bought and borrowed beauty;

ubi supr.
p. 165. vid.
Tert. de
cult. se-
min. lib. 1.
c. 4.

Pædag. lib.
3. c. 2. p.
220.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 59

beauty : For while by infinite Arts of Part 2. curious and costly dresses (some where- of he there particularly mentions) they seek to *ensnare* them, who children-like are apt to admire every thing that's strange and gaudy, they shew themselves to be Women that have put off Shame and Modesty ; and whoever (*says he*) calls them so, shall do them no wrong, as carrying the *signs* and representations of it in their very faces.

Thirdly, They mainly insisted upon this, that these Arts were *injurious* to God, and a *Disparagement* to his workman-ship. We are not (*says Tertul- lian*) to seek after neatness and finery beyond what is simple and *sufficient*, and what *pleases* God ; against whom they offend, who are not satisfied with his workman-ship : an Argument which he there prosecutes with great severi- ty. St. *Cyprian* treads in his *Masters* Steps, and prosecutes the same argu- ment with a great deal of zeal and sharpness ; amongst other things he tells us, that these additional Arts are a bold and *sacrilegious* Attempt, and an high Contempt of God, that it is to *reform* what God has *form'd*, to alter and change his work, and as much as they can

De cult.
Fæmin.
lib. 2. c. 3.
p. 156.
vid. Con-
stit. Ap.
lib. 1. c. 8.
p. 823.
Cl. Alex.
Pædag.
lib. 3. c.
11. p. 249.

De discipl.
& hab.
Virg. p.
166.

60 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. can to *disfigure* that person, which God has *made after his own Image and likeness*: that such a one has cause to fear, lest when the day of *Resurrection* comes, he that *made* them should not *know* them, nor receive them when they come for the promised rewards. Accordingly he brings in the great *Censor* and *Judge* of the world thus speaking to such a person: *This is none of my workmanship, nor is this our image and likeness; thou hast defil'd thy Skin with false Compositions, chang'd thy hair into an adulterous colour, thy face counterfeit, thy shape corrupt, thy countenance quite another thing, thou canst not behold God, thine eyes not being the same which God created, but which the Evil Spirit has infected; thou hast imitated the fiery sparkling and glittering eyes of the Serpent: of thine enemy hast thou learnt to be over-trim and neat, and with him like to receive thy Portion.* And are not these (*says he*) things fit to be thought on by the servants of God, and to be the daily objects of their care and fear?

*Hist. Relig. c. 9.
in vit. Pet.
p. 343.*

I cannot but in this place set down a passage which *Theodoret* reports of his own Mother, that in her younger years having

Ch. 3. **Primitive Christianity.** 61

having a distemper in one of her eyes, Part 2.
which had baffled all the Arts of *Physick*, she was at length perswaded to make her address to one *Peter*, famous for the gift of *Miracles*; who lived near *Antioch*, a very severe and ascetick course of life: and to render her self (as she thought) the more *considerable* in his eye, she put on all her *Bravery*, her richest *Robes*, her *Pendants*, and Chains of *Pearl*, and whatever could render her *sine* and *splendid*. No sooner was she come to him, but the severe and *uncomplemental* man at first sight bluntly entertained her with this discourse: Tell me *Daughter*, suppose an excellent *Artist* having drawn a picture according to all the Laws and Rules of Art, should expose and hang it forth to view, and another rude and unskilful *bungler* coming by, should find fault with this excellent piece, and attempt to *amend* it, draw the *eye-brows* to a greater length, make the Complexion *whiter*, or add more *colour* to the Cheeks; would not the true Author be justly angry, that his art was disparaged and undervalued, and *needless* additions made to the piece by an unskilful hand? And so 'tis here; can we

62 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. we think that the great *Artificer* of the World, the *Maker* and *Former* of our Nature, is not, and that justly, angry, when you accuse his incomprehensible Wisdom and Perfection, of Unskilfulness, and want of knowledge? for you would not add your *Reds*, *Whites*, or *Blacks*, did you not think your Bodies needed these Additions; and while you think so, you *condemn* your Creator for *Weakness* and *Ignorance*: But know, that he has *Power* answerable to his *Will*, and as the *Psalmist* tells us, *the Lord has done all things as he pleased*: and he that takes care of what is good for all, would not give what is evil and hurtful unto any. Corrupt not therefore the *Image* of God, nor attempt to *add*, what he in his Infinite Wisdom thought not fit to *give*: Study not to invent this adulterate beauty, which even to chaste persons oft proves a cause of ruine, by becoming a Snare to them that look upon it. The *Holy Man* said no more, and the *Young Lady* presently found her self wounded with the force of his reasonings, but would not leave him till she had obtained the end of her errand, which he granted not without great importunity, and an humble
and

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 63

and modest referring all to the *Grace* Part 2. of *God*, and so sent her home with a double cure, her body cured of its distemper, and her mind of its pride and vanity; and she ever after led a most humble, sober and pious life.

But it were to transcribe whole Books, to tell you what the Fathers (these three that I have so often mention'd especially) have said in this case, the cause being not more copiously than elegantly managed by them; and thither I refer the capable Reader, who has any further curiosity for these things. The *true* beauty of a Christian in those days lay not in *external* and adventitious Ornaments, but in the *goodness* and *purity* of the mind: The beauty of the Body (says *Clemens of Alexandria*) consists in a *good complexion*, and in *apt symmetry*, and proportion of its parts; but the greatest beauty in the World is that of the *Soul*, when 'tis adorn'd with the *Holy Spirit*, and the excellent Graces of it, *Justice*, *Prudence*, *Fortitude*, *Temperance*, the *love of Goodness and Modesty*, which is the brightest and most lovely ornament that the eye of man can behold: It is not (says he) the exterior aspect of the

Pædag. lib.
3. c. 11. p.
248.

Ibid. c. 2.
p. 216.

64 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. the man that is to be regarded, but the mind that is to be furnished and adorned with goodness and virtue; and therefore he wittily compares those women that *curiously* trick and trim up the Body, but neglect how 'tis with the Soul within, to the *Egyptian* Temples; look upon their *out-side*, and they are most *splendid* and *magnificent*, encompassed with delicate Groves, built with large Entries, and stately *Portico's*, surrounded with several rows of *Pillars*, the Walls both within and without set off with *stones* of several Countreys, curiously wrought and carv'd, the Temples themselves garnish'd with *Gold*, *Silver*, *Amber*, and all the glittering and *pretious* stones that *India* or *Ethiopia* can afford; but enter within them and enquire for the *Deity* that is there worshipped, and you shall be *gravely* shewed behind a Curtain a *Cat* or a *Crocodile*, or a *Serpent* of that Country, or some such *ill-favoured* Beast, which is the *residential* or *tutelar* Deity of that place. And just such (*says he*) do those women seem to me, who trim themselves with *Gold*, and are taken up in curling their hair, painting their faces, blacking their eyes, colouring

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 65

ing their Locks, and other undue Arts Part 2,
of softness and luxury, beautifying the
outward rayle and fence; but if a man
look within the veil and covering of
the Temple, what is under all his gay-
ness and finery, he shall be so far from
meeting with what is truly beautiful,
that it will excite this horror and a-
version: for he shall not find the
Image of God dwelling there, as might
reasonably be expected; but instead
thereof some *filthy* and treacherous
beast, that possesses the most inward re-
cesses of the Soul, a *lustful Ape*, or that
crafty Serpent that devours the under-
standing of a man, and turns his Soul
into a *nest* or *den*, full of most deadly
venom, and the poyson of his error
and deceit.

I conclude this with the account
which St. Gregory gives of his Sister Gor-
gonia, that she used no Gold to make
her fine, no *yellow hair*, ordered into
knots and curls, nor any other tricks
to make her head a *Scene* and *Pagean-
try*, no loose and *transparent* Garments,
no *lustre* of stones and jewels, enlight-
ning the air round about, and reflect-
ing splendor upon them that wear
them, no devices and arts of painting

*Nazan. in
Laud. Gor.
Or. 11. p.
181.*

E no

66 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 2. no affection of beauty that may be easily bought, no counter-working Gods Creation, dishonouring, reproaching, covering his workmanship with false and deceitful colours, suffering *aspirious* and *supposititious* beauty to steal away that natural Image which ought to be kept intire to God and the future state: all this was far from her; and though she very well understood the several *modes* and *garbs* of *bravery* amongst Women, yet she thought none so honorable as the manner of her life, and that *inward* brightness that was lodg'd in her mind: the only *redness* that pleased her, was that which was the fruit of *blushing* and *modesty*; no other *whiteness* but what came through *fasting* and *abstinence*, leaving *fucus's* and *paintings*, and *living Pictures*, and fading beauty to those that belong to Plays and Theatres, and to such, for whom to *blush* and be *ashamed* is a *shame* and a *disgrace*. To which I add that of *Tertullian*, who after he had smartly condemned and confuted the Arts of unlawful beauty, the vanity of going in too curious, costly and excessive Dresses, concludes with this counsel to the women of his time, to cloath themselves

De cult.
fæmin. lib.
2. c. 13. ad
fin.

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selves with the silks of honesty, the fine Part 2.
vestures of Piety, the purple of Modesty;
and being thus beautified and adorn'd
(says he) God himself will be your
Lover.

CHAP. IV.

Of their great Temperance and
Abstinence.

A vicious Curiosity about Meats and
Drinks a great Temptation. Severely
forbidden by the Christian Law.
The ancient Christians curious only of
such diet as ministr'd to health. They
gratified not ease and delicacy. The
great inconveniencies of intemperance
either in meats or drinks. Their chief
care about spiritual food. For other
things content with any provisions,
manifested in several Instances. An
over-nice and superstitious abstinence
from some kinds of Food, condemned.
The instance of Alcibiades the Mar-
tyr out of Eusebius. Christians un-
justly accused by the Heathens of excess
and prodigality in their Feastings.

68 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. Thyestean Suppers laid to their charge. The charge in both parts of it denied, and fully refuted by Tertullian, and other Christian Apologists.

AMongst the many temptations that besiege the life of Man, there is scarce any into which we are more easily betrayed than into a *vicious curiosity* about Meats and Drinks, and the excesses of an unruly Appetite ; therefore it is, that the Christian Religion does so frequently inculcate upon us the Precepts of *Sobriety and Temperance* ; to be *temperate in all things*, to watch and be sober, to cast off the works of darkness, to walk honestly as in the Day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in excess of Wine, Revellings, and Banquetings ; to take heed that our hearts be not at any time over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and that we be not as the men of the old world, brutishly taken up with eating and drinking when the Flood came and swept all away. The Law of Christ commands us to fast often, to keep under the Body, and to make no provision for the Flesh ; if nature, regularly governed, be content with

Ch. 4. Primitibe Christianity. 69

with *little*, Religion will teach us to Part 2.
 be content with less. These Rules the
 first Christians exactly transcribed into
 their Lives, being the greatest instances
 of real abstinence and mortification,
 which they both *practised* themselves,
 and *pressed* upon others: they knew
 very well that God had given men a
Charter of freedom indifferently to use
 the Creatures, and to enjoy them in
 some degree, not only for *necessity* but
delight; but yet were afraid to go so
 far as they might, or to do any thing
 that might look towards excess, or ar-
 gue an irregular and unsober mind;
 they contented themselves with such
 provisions as were conducive to *Health*
 and *strength*, without any studied seek-
 ing after those that were more *luscious*
 and *delightful*. 'Tis very true what S. Ba-
 sil observes, that by reason of mens dif-
 ferent *ages* and course of Life, their dif-
 ferent *Tempers* and Constitutions of
 Body and other Circumstances, no one
 fixed and certain Rule can be prescribed
 in this case: but yet our food and diet
 ought for the main to be regulated by
 the general end of it, which is not wan-
 tonly to *please* the *Palate*, but to mini-
 ster to *Health*, and to repair the Weak-

Reg. fus.
 disput. in-
 terrog. 19.
 tom. 2. p.
 560.

70 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. nefs and decays of Nature. Many
Pedag. 1. (says *Clemens Alexandrinus*) like brute
2. 6. 1. 7. beasts, *live* only that they may *eat*; but
 439. for us we are commanded to *eat*, that
 we may *live*: for food and pleasure is
 not the *work* and design for which we
 live in the world, our residence here
 being in order to an incorruptible life;
 and therefore our nourishment ought
 to be easie and simple, and such as is
 subservient to the two main ends of
life, health and strength. We ought to
 chuse such food (as *Justin Martyr* tells
 his friends) not as may gratifie our *ease*
 and *delicacy*, but make our lives *useful*
 and *serviceable*; and if at any time
 overtaken with want, we should qui-
 etly acquiesce in that state: and there-
 fore a little after, he smartly declaims
 D. p. 512. against all excess. Wine (*says he*) is
 neither to be drunk daily to *excess*, nor
 to be used as commonly as *water*: both
 indeed are God's *Creatures*; but *water*
 necessary, *wine* given only to help and
 relieve the body; which [*immoderate-
 ly taken*] chains up the *Tongue*, sparkles
fire out of the *Eyes*, makes the *Leggs*
 tremble, and the understanding being
 gone, readily takes off its Cup of dead-
 ly *Poyson*; contrary to God's Ordina-
 tion

*Epist. ad
 Rom. & St.
 1. 1. p. 506.*

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 71

tion it turns the peaceful *Instruments* Part 2.
of Husbandry into *Swords* and *Spears*.
It may indeed be necessary sparingly to
drink Wine both Winter and Summer;
but he that drinks it to *excess*, as a man
that takes over-much of a Medicine,
like a Dog or a Swine betrays his own
shame. But above all men in the world,
it least becomes us [*Christians*] as if we
were votaries to Luxury, to abuse the
Creatures of God, and to make use of
thirst, as a pretence to drunkenness, see-
ing we ought to drink no more than
what will serve to *quench* our thirst;
not like those who swallowing down
Wine, as men do drink in a burning
Fever, quickly make an end of them-
selves through their Intemperance.
Nor are we less to take heed of *Glut-*
tony, contenting our selves with a *spare*
diet, and such only as is necessary; not
giving way to the infinite and unsatis-
fied cravings of a nice and intemperate
appetite, which will have a thousand
pretences to defend it self; but ruling
our selves according to the wise *sen-*
tence of him who said, τροφὴς ἀεὶ
χρηστέον ἵνα τὸ μὴ πεινῆν, *That we are to*
eat only to satisfy our Hunger. Thus
that ancient Father. To this purpose

72 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. also *Clemens Alexandrinus* discourses at large, representing the great Evils and
ut supr.
Cap. 1,
per tot. 2. Inconveniencies of gluttony and excess, that it wastes the *Estate*, ruins the *Body* by impairing its Health, debauching the Stomach, deflouring its Taste, begetting an ill habitude and Temper, and sowing it with the seeds of all Diseases; it dulls the *Mind*, and renders it inept and sluggish, and prepares it for the Entertainment of any Vice or Wickedness; that although we are not absolutely bound to abstain from variety of Meats, yet we are not to make them our Desire or study, especially such as favour of Niceness and Delicacy, and are apt to pamper and excite lust and wantonness; for though 'tis true all things were especially made for mans sake, yet it is not convenient to make use of all, and at some times less than at others; to the advantageous use of a thing, respect being to be had, not only to the thing it self, but to the *Time, Occasion* and *Manner* of it: that therefore our Meals for the main, should be *light* and *easy*, not mixed with *variety* of Dainties, but such as may prepare for *Fasting*, and the exercises of Religion. Upon this account *St. Cyprian* in an Epistle, wherein he
gives

*Ad Presb.
& Diac. ep.
7. p. 18.*

Ch.4. Primitivè Christianity. 73

gives directions about Prayer, advises Part 2. them (and to make the Counsel more effectual, tells them, that he was *warn'd* of it by immediate *Revelation* from God) to eat and drink soberly and sparingly, that outward Snares might not enfeeble that Heavenly Vigor and Sprightliness that was in their Breasts, lest their Minds being over-charged with too plentiful Meals might be less *watchful unto Prayer*. The same Counsel S. Hierom gives to *Leta* about the Education of her Daughter, that her Diet should be thin and mean, and that she should never eat more, than she might arise with some *Appetite*, so as that after Meals she might be presently fit either to read or sing *Psalms*.

*Ad Let.
tom. 1. p.
57.*

*Conc. Laod.
Can. 53.*

When at any time invited to publick solemnities as *Marriages*, and the like, the prudence of the Church thought fit to lay restraints upon them, and not only to forbid them light and *ludicrous* actions, as *leaping* or *dancing*, but that they should *dine* and *sup* gravely and *modestly*, as becomes Christians.

The chief care of Christians then was to become Partakers τῆς αἰνῶς τροφῆς τῆς θείας, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* styles it, of that *Divine Food* that
is

Id. p. 144.

74 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. *is from above*, and that only is capable to give real satisfaction, little regarding what provisions they had (so they had but any) for that part that dwelt here below. When *Julian* the Emperor, to raise Money for his wars began to squeeze and oppress the Christians, he sent amongst others to *St Basil* (who had formerly been his fellow-student at *Athens*) for a thousand pounds; the answer he sends him was, that it could not be expected there, where he had not so much provision beforehand as would serve for one day; that there were no arts of *Cookery* at his house, nor knives *stain'd* with the blood of slaughtered provisions; that his greatest dainties were a few *Pot-herbs*, a piece of Bread, and a little sour *vapid* Wine: no such exceedings as to stupifie his senses with fumes arising from a loaded stomach, and to render them incapable to discharge their functions through intemperance and excess. *Chrysostom* commends *Olympias* not more for the modesty of her Garb, than the meanness and sobriety of her diet, to which she had so us'd herself, that she had got the perfect mastery over all undue appetites and inclinations, and

Basil. Ep.
208. tom.
3. p. 225.
confer. So-
crat. lib. 3.
c. 13. p.
185.

Ep. 2. ad O-
lymp. tom.
4. p. 616.

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and had not only *bridled* the horse, but Part 2.

tamed and reduc'd him into an entire subjection, and taught her stomach to receive only so much meat and drink as was enough to keep her alive, and in health. This indeed was the great end of their signal Abstinence in those days, that by subduing the *Flesh* they might keep the stricter hand over the inordinate motions of *corrupt Nature*.

When *Celsus* accused the *Jews*, and in them obliquely the Christians for needlessly abstaining from *Swines flesh*, and some other sorts of food; affirming this to be no such great matter, when the *Pythagoreans* wholly abstain'd from eating any *living Creature*, who yet were never thought the better, or the more *dear* to God for it. *Origen* answers, that whatever reason the *Jews* did it for (God having appointed the difference) this concern'd not *Christians*, that 'tis not *what enters in at the mouth that defiles the man, nor does meat commend us to God*, nor do we think this abstinence any such great matter; nor yet do we so indulge the belly, as to affect or pursue such delights; that there's a vast difference between *us* and the *Pythagoreans* in this affair: they indeed

Orig. contr. Cels. l. 5. p. 259, 264.

76 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. indeed abstain upon the account of their absurd and fabulous Doctrine of the Souls *Transmigration*, or passing out of one Body into another, and so forbear to kill or eat any living Creature, lest haply they may destroy and devour their own *Friends* or *Children* : but we in all our abstinence do it only *to keep under the Body, and to bring it into Subjection, endeavouring to mortifie the Deeds of the Body, to expell and extinguish our Members that are upon the Earth, Fornication, Uncleaness, Inordinate Affection, and every Evil Concupiscence and Desire* : where he fully vindicates the Christians in their Abstemiousness and Temperance, from doing it out of any vain and foolish Affectation, any nice and singular Opinion, any base and sordid, morose or unsociable temper ; they were careful to keep the *Mean*, and to avoid *Sordidness* as well as *Luxury* ; nor did they profess themselves Enemies to the Provisions of humane Life any further, than as they were inconsistent with the ends of Sobriety and Religion. As may appear from a memorable Passage related by *Eusebius* , out of the Letter of the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vien* in *France*,
to

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 77

to those in *Asia*. *Alcibiades* (one of Part 2. those, who shortly after suffered Martyrdom) had accusom'd himself to a very rigid and sordid kind of Life, rejecting all other sorts of Food except only *Bread* and *Water*: and this he did both before and after he was in prison; which it seems had an ill Influence upon others; whereupon *Attalus*, one of the most eminent of those famous Martyrs, the day after his first being exposed in the *Amphitheatre*, had it reveal'd to him (*For as yet, says the Historian, the Divine Grace had not withdrawn it self, but they had the Holy Spirit as their immediate Councillor to instruct them*; which by the way may give countenance to those frequent *Visions*, and *Divine Condescensions* which *Cyprian* speaks of in his Epistles: To this *Attalus* it was reveal'd) that *Alcibiades* did amiss in refusing to use the *Creatures* of God, and in thereby giving a Scandal, and an Offence to others: upon which he laid aside his *Singularity*, and with all Thankfulness to God promiscuously ate any kind of Food.

From the whole of what has been said it's very evident, what little reason the Heathens had to accuse the Christians

78 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. stians (in their *agapæ*, or love-feasts, especially) of *excess* and *prodigality*; for

Apol. c. 39. that they did *Tertullian* exprelly af-
p. 32. firms; Our *little Suppers* (*says he*) be-
Athenag. sides as being guilty of other wicked-
legat. pro ness they traduce as *prodigal*, saying of
christian. us as *Diogenes* did of the people of *Me-*
p. 37. *gara*, that they *supp'd* as if they meant to

ibid. dye to morrow. Nay, what were infinitely horrid and barbarous, they commonly charg'd them with *Thyestian* suppers, and eating Man's Flesh. To the first part of the charge, concerning their prodigality, *Tertullian* answers, That they could easilier see a mote in anothers eye, than a Beam in their own; if they look'd home they would find that 'twas their own *Tribes* and *Precincts*, wherein the very Air was corrupted with the unsavory fumes of their loaded Tables, and over-charged stomachs; and yet all this was pass'd by, and only the poor Christians *Triclinium* call'd in question; that if they had any feast it was a *love-feast*, and whatever cost was laid out upon it, was expended not for *vain-glory*, but upon the accounts of *Piety* and Religion; not to nourish *Parasites* and Flatterers, but to refresh the *Poor*: that the
order

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order of the feast was as *sober* and regu- Part 2.
lar as the *cause* was *honest*, going no
further than modesty would admit;
they *prayed* to God before they ven-
tur'd upon his Creatures, ate but what
suffic'd Hunger, drank no more than
consisted with sober and modest men;
and fed so, as remembering they were
to rise *at night* to worship God: when
they had done they sung *Psalms*, ei-
ther of their own *Composure*, or out of
the *Holy Volumes*, and as they *begun*, so
they ended the Feast with Prayer and
then departed with the same care to
preserve their modesty and chastity; so
that they appeared not so much to have
feasted at supper, as to have *fed* upon
Discipline and Order. *So be.* For the
other part of the charge, their feeding
upon *mans flesh* at this common supper,
'twas a suggestion so *savage* and *barba-*
rous, as could have found belief with
nothing but the very Spirit of Malice;
we shall again meet with this objection
in another place, and shall therefore
here only note out of their *Apologist*, *Athenag.*
that it was a charge never offer'd to be *Ibid. p. 38.*
made *good* against them, nor prov'd in
any of those many thousand Tryals
which the Christians had had in all
parts

80 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 2. parts of the Empire; that it was very unlikely they should be guilty of eating *Humane* Flesh, who did not think it lawful to be present at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where Men were *slain*, or so much as to *taste* any *Blood* at all. So *Biblias* the Martyr told her Enemies, when being reproached with this in the midst of her Torments, she cryed out, *How is it possible that we should devour Infants, as you charge us, who think it not lawful so much as to taste the Blood of any Creature?* For even till then, and a long time after, they observ'd that Canon of the first *Apostolick* Council, *To abstain from things strangled and from Blood.* So far were they from being either *barbarous* or *luxurious*. No, our Feasts (as he says in *Minutius Felix*) are not only *chast* but *sober*, we indulge not our selves in Banquets, nor make our Feasts with Wine, but temper our Chearfulness with Gravity and Seriousness. And indeed their often Watchings and Fastings, and their constant Observance of the strictest parts of Devotion, sufficiently shewed how little they pamper'd or indulg'd the *Flesh*, the *Signs* whereof they every where carried in their very *Faces*;

Euseb. hist.
Ecccl. ubi
supr. p. 158.
Cap. 1.

Min. Fæl.
p. 26.

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 81

faces; and this was so notorious, that Part 2. their very Enemies reproached them with their *trembling* Joynts, and their *pale* ghastly Looks. And *Lucian* giving an account of the *Christian* Assembly, into which he tells us *Critias* was brought to be made a *Profelyte*, describes them to be *A Company of Persons with their Heads hanging down, and pale Faces*; which certainly did not arise from their fear of Suffering, (for no Men in the World were ever so *willing*, nay, so desirous of laying down their Lives as they) but from their frequent *abstinence* and *fasting*. To which purpose S. *Basil's* Comment is most apposite; where commending *Temperance*, or (as he calls it) *Continence*, using the word in its largest Sense; other Virtues (says he) being mainly exercised in *secret*, are not altogether so *visible* to the eyes of Men: whereas *Continence*, where ever it is, will at first sight betray it self: For as a good Complexion, and an excellent Constitution of Body, peculiarly design a Man to be an *Athletes*, or Champion; so leanness of Body, and that *Paleness* which is the fruit of *Continence*, evidence a Christian to be a real *Champi-*

Pallidi, trepidi apud eundem p. 10.

Philopatry. tom. 2. p. 1007.

Reg. sup. disp. inter rog. 17. p. 559.

82 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 2. *pion* for the Commands of *Christ*, vanquishing his Enemy in the weakness of his Body, and shews how able he is to contend in the Cause of Piety and Vertue. The very sight of such a man must needs be of great advantage to affect us, to behold him sparingly and moderately using even those things that are necessary, not paying Nature its *Tribute*, without some Regret, begrutching the little time that he spends about it, and therefore making haste to get from the Table to return to his better Exercises and Employments.

CHAP. V.

Of their Singular Continence and Chastity.

Their admirable Continence discovered in several particulars. Their Abstinence from Marriage. Their Marrying only to comply with the end of the Institution. Seldom married more than once. Their Continence admired by Heathens. The Fathers generally severe against second Marriages. The mo-

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 83

*moderate Judgment of Clemens Alex- Part 2,
andrinus in the case. The Canons of se-
veral Councils concerning it. Three sorts
of Digamy or second Marriages. Their
shunning all occasions and appearances
of Lightness and Immodesty; abstaining
from Publick Meetings, Feasts, Plays,
&c. Constantine's Law, that no Wi-
dow should be forced to appear at publick
Tribunals. Another of Theodosius,
that none should marry within twelve
compleat Months after her Husbands
Decease. The promiscuous use of
Baths forbidden both by Canon and
Civil Laws. Unmarried persons, espe-
cially of Ecclesiastick Relation, not fa-
miliarly to converse together. Muli-
eres Συμειραισσαι, who. How brought
in: condemned by the Council of An-
tioch, and that of Nice. Clandestine
Marriages disallowed. Their abhor-
ring all immodest Pictures and Dis-
courses. The great modesty of Gorgo-
nia. Their valuing Chastity above Life;
submitting to any kind of Death ra-
ther than violate it; many chusing to
kill themselves rather than be deflower'd.
Several Instances of it. Impurity in
Christians bewail'd as a great Scandal;
punished by the Church with very se-*

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Part 2. *vere Penalties. Several passages out of the Fathers and Councils noted to that purpose. Christians accused by the Heathens of Incest and Adultery. The summe of the Charge. Their Answer. The Heathens very unfit to bring in this Charge, being themselves so notoriously guilty; whole Nations, their wisest Philosophers, their very Gods themselves: this fully prov'd against them. The very Gentiles tacitly confessed the Christians innocent, by condemning them to be forcibly prostituted. Apart of their Religion not to give way to wanton looks or unchaste desires. The eminent Prevalency of Christianity in converting persons from Uncleanneſs and Debauchery pleaded and asserted. The Original of the Accuſation enquired into. Found to ariſe from the beaſtly praſtiſes of the Gnoſticks, &c. who though guilty of the moſt notorious Villanies, and of theſe in particular, yet ſhrowded themſelves under the general Name of Chriſtians. Some forced through fear to confeſs the Chriſtians guilty of theſe Crimes.*

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Part 2.

A Third considerable instance of that sobriety and moderation for which the Christians were so renowned of old, was their **Continence**, in abstaining from all manner of Uncleanneſs, which is that Vertue that we properly call *Chastity*; a Vertue for which how eminent they were (notwithstanding what their Enemies heavily charged upon them to the contrary, of which afterwards) we ſhall take notice of in ſome few particulars.

First, The Christians of thoſe Times were ſo far from breaking in upon any *unchaſte* Embraces, that they frequently abſtained even from *lawful* Pleaſures, and kept themſelves even from the *honourable* and *undefiled* Bed, never marrying all their Life. We are (ſays *Oſtavius*) *chaſte* in our *Speech*, and *chaſter* in our *Bodies*; and very many of us, though we do not boaſt on't, do inviolably preſerve a *perpetual* Virginity; and are ſo far from any extravagant Deſire after *inceſtuons* Mixtures, that many ſtand at a diſtance from the moſt *chaſte* and modeſt Embraces. Thus *Juſtin Martyr* tells the Emperors, that amongſt the *Chriſtians* there were a

Min. Fel. p. 26.

A. 2. p. 62.

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Part 2. great many of either Sex, who had from their Child-hood been educated in the Christian Discipline, who for sixty or seventy Years had kept themselves *single* and uncorrupt; and he wished the like could be shown in all other sorts of Men. To the same purpose another *Apologist*; 'tis very easie (says he) to find many amongst us both men and women, who remain unmarried even in *old Age*; conceiving that in this state they shall have fitter opportunities of drawing near to God. Not that they who persever'd in this course of *Celibate* did combine themselves into distinct Societies, and bind themselves under an *Oath* of perpetual Virginity, (as the Humor was in after ages;) for of this not the least Shadow appears in any of the Writings of those times, they lived promiscuously till towards the end of the third *Century*, applied themselves to the business of their Place and Station, and only lived single, that in those troublesome and hazardous Times of Persecution, they might be less ensnared with the Entanglements of the World, and be more free for the Exercises of Religion.

*Athenag.
leg. pro
Christian.
p. 37.*

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Secondly, When they did marry, they Part 2.
generally profess'd they did it only
to comply with the great end of the
Institution, viz. The Propagation of
Mankind; not to gratifie wanton and
brutish Desires, but to answer the great
end of Nature, that Humane Society
might not fail : Either (say they) we
marry not at all ; but keep our selves
always continent ; or if we do marry,
it is for no other end but the bringing
forth, and the bringing *up* of Children :
Whoever amongst us takes a Wife ac-
cording to the Laws prescribed us, he
reckons he does it only for the beget-
ting of Children ; within this his De-
sires are bounded and limited ; as the
Husband-man concerns himself no fur-
ther in Tilling his Ground, and Sow-
ing of his Corn, than to bring forth
the Crop at Harvest. Hence it was, that
they seldom married more than *once* :
We willingly contain our selves (as he
speaks in *M. Felix*) within the bound
of single Marriage, and either know
but *one* Woman, (and that merely out
of a desire of Children) or *none*. The
first Knot being loosed by Death, they
very rarely tied a Second : which
gained great Honor and Reputation

Just. Mart.
ib. p. 71.
Athenag.
ibid.

ubi supra.

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Part 2. both to them and to their Religion with the *Gentiles* amongst whom they lived. *Chrysostom* tells us, that a Discourse hap'ning on a time between him and his Master, who was a *Gentile*, concerning his *Mother*, being told that she was a *Widow*, and after enquiry concerning her Age, being answered that she was forty years old, and that she had liv'd twenty years of the time a *Widow*, the Man was surpriz'd with a strange Admiration, and cried out before all the Company, *Behold* (saith he) *what brave Women there are amongst the Christians!* The truth is, such was the Heavenly Zeal and Temper of the first Ages of Christianity, that they would have no more to do with the World than they needs must, but industriously shun'd all its burdens and encumbrances, amongst which they especially reckoned Marriage a State not rashly to be engag'd in; for once it was allowable, but for a second time *inexcusable*. And indeed it cannot be denied but that many of the Ancient Fathers, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Hierom*, and others, did enveigh against *Second Marriages* with too much bitterness and severity, violently pressing many passages in
Scri-

Ad vid. junior. tom. 4. p. 458.

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Scripture to serve the Cause, straining Part 2.
 the string many times till it crack'd
 again; and not sticking to censure and
 condemn second Marriages as little bet-
 ter than *Adultery*. Hear what one of
 the *Apologists* says to it: Amongst us *Athenag. at*
 every man either remains as he was *supra.*
 born, or engages himself in one only
 Marriage: For as for Second Marriages,
 they are but a more plausible and *de-*
corous kind of *Adultery*; our Lord as-
 suring us, That *whoever puts away his*
Wife, and takes another, commits Adul-
tery. Which place, as also another of
 like Importance, how perversely he in-
 terprets, and impertinently applies to
 his purpose, I am not willing to remem-
 ber. *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks in
 the Case with much more *Modesty* and
 Moderation; As for those to whom
 God has given the Gift of *Absolute*
 Continence, we think them happy: *Catech. 4.*
 we admire the Gravity and Stayedness
 of those that content themselves with
 a single Marriage; but yet say withal,
 that Compassion ought to be had of
 others, and that we *should bear one ano-*
thers Burdens, lest he who seems to
 stand fair do fall himself: and as for Se-
 cond Marriages, that of the Apostle is to
 take

Strom. l. 3.
p. 428. vid.
Epiph.
Har. 48. p.
178. Cyril.
ad Illum.
p. 90.

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Part 2. take place, if they cannot contain, they should marry: for it is better to marry than to burn. However, 'tis certain the Fathers of Old generally did what they could to discourage second Marriages. The ancient *Canons* (as *Zonaras* tells us) suspended such persons from the Communion for a whole Year; and the Council of *Laodicea*, though it determine not the Time, yet it requires that they should spend some small time at least in *Penance*, in Fasting and Prayer, before they be received to the Communion. By the *Canons* that are call'd *Apostolical*, who ever after Baptism has engag'd in a Second Marriage is rendred incapable of any degree in the ministry. Accordingly *Epiphanius* reports of one *Joseph*, whom he knew, a converted *Jew*, and advanced to the dignity of a *Count* by *Constantine* the Great, that when the *Arians* would have laid hands upon him to have made him Bishop, he got off by this wile, by pretending himself to have been twice married. But though the Fathers and Ancient Councils were thus severe in this Case, yet the rigor of their Censure will be much abated, if what some tell us be true, that many of their *Pas-*
sages

De Can. 7.
Conc. Neo-
cesar.

Can. 1.

Can. 17.

Heres. 30.
p. 61.

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sages are not levell'd against Successive Part 2.
Marriages, but against having two
Wives at the same time. For as a Learn- *Justell. not. in Can. 1. Conc. Laod.*
ed man hath observed, there were three
sorts of *Digamy*; the first a mans having
two Wives at once: this was condemn'd
by the *Roman Laws*. The Second, when
the former Wife being dead, the Man
married a *second time*. A Third, when
for any slight cause a Man put away his
Wife by a Bill of *Divorce*, and married
another, which though then frequent-
ly practis'd and conniv'd at (if not al-
low'd) by the Laws of those Times,
was yet prohibited by the Decrees of
the Church; and of this last sort (says
he) many of the Ancient Canons are to
be understood.)

Thirdly, They were infinitely care-
ful to shun all *Occasions* and Appear-
ances of lightness and Immodesty, what-
ever might tend to inveigle their Sen-
ses, and to debauch their Mind and
Manners: Nay, whatever might but give
a Suspicion of Wantonness and Inconti-
nence. They declin'd as much as might
be, going to all Publick Meetings, such
as Feasts, Plays, Shews, &c. Therefore
Cyprian severely chides with some *Vir-* *De discipl. & hab. Virg. p.*
gins, for being present at *Weddings*,
where 167.

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Part 2. where they laughed freely, could not but hear loose Discourses, see uncom-ly carriages, feed upon luxurious Dishes, all which must needs not only *kindle*, but add *Fuel* to the *Fire*, and fill their Minds with indecent thoughts and desires. S. *Hierom* on the other hand does as much commend some whom he knew, who always kept at home on *Festival* days to avoid the Crowd and Gazes of the people, and would never go abroad at those times when they could not venture into the publick without the greatest Care and Custody of themselves. For this reason *Constantine* made a Law, that *Matrons* should not be forc'd upon the account of Debt, to come out of their own Houses, to appear before the publick *Tribunals*, but that the business should be decided in such way, as might not betray the Modesty of that Sex. And when afterwards the Fervor of Christianity began to abate apace, and persons had in a great measure lost that huge Reverence which former Times had for Continence and Chastity; *Theodosius*, to restrain them a little within the Bounds of Decency, provided a Law, that *no Woman*, of what Quality or Rank soever, should *marry* again

*De Virg.
servand. p.
71. tom. 1.*

*Cod. Theod.
l. 1. tit. 10.
l. 1.*

*Id. l. 3. tit.
8. l. 1. Vide
Gothofred.
in loc.*

Ch. 5. *Primitive Christianity.* 93

again within a year at least, (*i. e.* with- Part 2.
in twelve *full* Months; whereas under the Old *Roman* Laws the time of Mourning was but Ten, as a Learned *Interpreter* of that Law observes) after her Husbonds Death, and this he ratified by a double Penalty; a Note of Perpetual *Infamy* to be set upon the offending person, and the loss of her whole *Dower*, and whatever Estate her Husband had bequeathed her, which was to go to the Children she had by him, or (if none) to his next of kin. By the *Laodicean* Council, not onely
Clergy-men, and such as have entred upon a State of Continency, but all Christian men whatsoever, are forbidden to use the same *common Baths* with Women. And for very good reason; it being a thing (as *Zonaras* observes) both *shameful* and uncomly in it self, and pernicious in its consequence: For how easily does any unlawful *flame* kindle from such a *spark*. And when Humane Nature is of it self so ready to *boil over*, who would pour *Oyl* upon the *Fire*? A thing ever look'd upon as repugnant to all the Laws of Modesty, yea, even by them that *are without*; this being (says the *Council*) one of the chief-

Can. 30.
Vide Conc.
in Trull.
Can. 77.

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Part 2. chiefest things which the very Hea-
then *condemn*, and for which they cen-
sure and reproach us. Parallel to this,
Photius, and his Commentator *Balsa-*
mon tell us of a Law of the Emperour
Justinian, making it a sufficient Cause of
Divorce, and losing her *Dowry*, for a
Woman either to *feast* or *bathe* in the
Company of other Men, without the
leave and consent of her Husband. In-
deed in the first and purer Times they
took all imaginable care that unmar-
ried Persons, especially such as were
of *Ecclesiastical* Cognizance, or had de-
voted themselves to a severer course of
Piety, should not commonly converse
together. *Cyprian* writing to *Pompo-*
nins about the Virgins that had taken
Profession of Continence upon them,
but lived too familiarly with some per-
sons that belonged unto the Church,
charges him that Men and Virgins
should not only not *sleep* near one an-
other, but not dwell together in the
same House, lest the Infirmary of their
Sex, and the slipperiness of their Youth
should betray them into the *snare of the*
Devil. Wherefore he commends *Pom-*
ponius for having suspended the *Deacon*
and the rest that had kept such famili-

Nomocan.
τίτλ. 3.
κεφ. λζ.
p. 104.

Ep. 62. p.
98. vid. fis.
Conc. 1.
Carthag.
Can. 3, 4.

Ch. 5. *Primitive Christianity.* 95

ar Correspondence with those Virgins; Part 2.
and ordered that they should not be absolved, till they had sufficiently testified their Repentance, and made it appear by satisfactory evidence, that no unlawful Familiarity had passed between them, and that if ever they returned to the like Cohabitation, greater Penalties should be inflicted upon them. The Foundation of which ill Custom doubtless sprung, or at least took Encouragement from hence; in those first Times of Christianity it was usual for *Clergy-men*, such especially as were sent up and down to preach the Gospel, to have some grave and sober *Woman* along with them, who might be helpful and assisting to them, and who was neither *Wife* nor *Concubine*, but taken in either upon the account of necessary *Attendance*, or the pretence of *Piety*. These Women in the Writings of the Church (wherein there is frequent mention of them) are called *Συνεταίχτοι*, such as were brought in, taken into the House as *Domestick Assistants* to *Ecclesiastick* Persons. But this proving matter of Scandal and Inconvenience, was not only cried out against by *private* Fathers, but by *publick* Synods;
the

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Part 2. the Council of *Antioch* held in the

East. Hist. Reign of *Aurelian* the Emperor, *Antioch. l. 7. c. no 272.* in a *Synodical* Epistle, where-
30. p. 281. in they censure the Doctrines and Pra-

ctises of *Paulus Samosatenus*, condemn this among the rest, that he and his *Presbyters* and *Deacons* kept these *introduced Women*, whereby horrible inconveniencies did arise; for besides the Snare and Temptation of it, although they should keep themselves innocent, yet they could not avoid the Suspicion and Scandal that would arise, and the danger of drawing in others by their bad Example. For which

Epist. ad
Paragor.
Presbyt.
ep. 198.
p. 216.

reason *S. Basil* writes to an old *Presbyter* in his Diocess, to abstain from the company of a Woman, with whom he was wont to *cohabit*; not so much to avoid Temptation to Incontinence, (the man being then seventy Years of Age) as that he may not lay a Stumbling Stone, and occasion of *Offence* in his Brothers way. The same was universally forbidden by the great Council of *Nice*, and no Man within the Clergy allowed to have any Woman near him, unless his *Mother*, his *Sister*, or his *Aunt*, or such only of whom there could be no *Suspicion*,

Can. 3. ubi
vid. Zonar.

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as we find it in the third *Canon* of that Part 2.
 Council: in the ancient version where-
 of these *mulieres ἀνεύθυντοι* are styl'd
Extraneæ, Strangers; by which name
 they are also called in a Law of the
 Emperour *Honorius*, prohibiting any
 Clergy-man whatsoever, to keep com-
 pany with these *Strange-women*, limit-
 ing their *Converse* and *Cohabitation*
 within the very same Relations to
 which they are restrained by the *Ni-
 cene Canon*, which 'tis not to be doubt-
 ed that Emperor had in his Eye when
 he made that *Constitution*. And be-
 cause *Bishops* were the highest order in
 the Church; therefore that their ho-
 nour might be especially secured, Care
 was taken, that no Bishop under Pe-
 nalty of being *deposed*, should enter-
 tain, or cohabit with any *Woman* what-
 soever, either Relation or Stranger, that
 so all Pretence either of Temptation
 or Scandal might be cut off. For the
 same reason it was, that they disallowed
 all *Clandestine* Marriages which were
 not openly made in the Face of the
 Church, accounting them no better
 than a State of *Adultery* or *Fornication*.
 And as they were careful not to give
 Offence to others, so they were not

C. Th. lib.
 16. Tit. 2.
 de Episc.
 l. 44.

Synops. B.
 fil. lib. Tit.
 l. c. 41. p.
 22.

Tertull. de
 pudicit. c.
 4. p. 557.

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Part 2. willing themselves to come within the shadow of a Temptation, they stood at a distance from whatever was offensive either to their *eyes* or *ears*; their *ears* they stopt against all loose idle Songs, all filthy and obscene discourses, their *eyes* they shut against all uncomly Objects, all wanton and lascivious Pictures, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* expressly tells us; not doing any thing that seemed but to carry an ill color with it. *Nazianzen* tells us of his Sister *Gorgonia*, a vertuous Woman, whose Example we have often quoted, that for modesty and sobriety she went beyond all other Women; that she reconcil'd the two opposite States of Humane Life, *Celibate* and *Marriage*; the one more *sublime* and *divine*, but more *dangerous* and *troublesome*, the other more *humble*, but withal more *safe*; that she avoided the Inconveniencies of each, and chose what was most excellent out of both, the *sublimity* of the one, and the *security* of the other; shewing that neither of these states in it self did wholly tie us up either to God or the World, nor yet wholly separate us from them, so that the one should be absolutely rejected, or the other absolutely

*Admonit.
ad Græc.
p. 40. vid.
Conc. 6. in
Tull. Can.
100. Orat.
11. p. 180.*

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ly commended and embrac'd; but that Part 2.
it is the *Mind* that admirably presides
both over Marriage and Virginity :
And withall, further adds concerning
her, that so great was her *Bashfulness*
and Modesty, that when she lay under a *Id. p. 18. 5.*
most acute and dangerous Distemper,
yet she refused to have any *Physician*
come near her, as blushing that any man
should either see or touch her.

Fourthly, They valued their innocen-
cy and their honour above their *Lives*,
and therefore those to undergo the
greatest Dangers, to *die*, yea, to *kill*
themselves rather than any violence
should be offered to their Chastity. As
the fairest Promises could not tempt
them, so neither could the fiercest Tor-
ments affright them into any unchaste
Compliance. When *Maximinus* the *Ensch. Hist.*
Emperour governed in the *Eastern* parts, *Ecc. lib. 8.*
amongst other effects of his wild and *c. 14. p.*
brutish Fury and extravagance, he fill'd *312.*
all places where he came with Adul-
teries and Ravishments, abusing Women
and deflouring Virgins; which suc-
ceeded well enough (says the *Histo-*
rian) with all others, except only
Christians, who generously despising
Death, made light of the Rage and Fury

Part 2. of the Tyrant: the men underwent all sorts of punishments which cruelty could invent; the Women bore up with a Courage, no less *manly* and unconquerable; and when any were drawn out to be abused, they rather submitted their Lives to *Death*, than their Bodies to *Dishonour*. Of these he tells us of one especially at *Alexandria*, a Woman of great Birth and Fortunes; but much more famous for her Vertues, especially her Modesty and Chastity, which she stoutly defended, and preferred before her Nobility, or her Riches, her Excellent Parts, or any Accomplishments whatsoever. The Emperor had oft attempted her by all Arts of Solicitation; but all in vain, till at last, not being able to prevail, his affection somewhat attempering his Fierceness and Cruelty, he would not put her to Death, which she was most ready to have undergone; but spoil'd her of her Estate, and then sent her into Banishment; there being many hundreds of others at the same time, who not able to bear the Violation of their Chastity wherewith the Governours and Commanders threatned them, willingly subjected themselves to all kinds
of

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of Racks and Tortures, and the worst Part 2.
capital Punishments which their Enemies could inflict upon them. Nay, when the case so happen'd that they were set upon, and all their Resoluteness could not provoke the cruel Kindness of their Enemies to dispatch them, they would rather dispatch *themselves*, than fall into the rude Hands of Lust and Wantonness. Thus did that famous *Woman*, and her two Daughters, (mention'd by the same Author, whose Names, as *Chrysostom* in an *Oration* on purpose in their Commendation tells us, were *Domnina* the Mother, *Bernice* and *Prosdice* the Daughters) eminent as well for the outward Beauty and *Features* of their Bodies, as for the inward *Vertues* of their Minds, being sought for as a Prey, to lust under the *Dioclesian* Persecution, they fled for it; but being found out by the Souldiers that were sent to search for them, and knowing there was no other way to escape, in their return, they beg'd leave of the Souldiers, that for some private Occasions they might step a little out of the Rode; which being granted, sitting themselves for what they had beforehand agreed on, as well as the time

Ib. c. 12. p. 305.

Hom. 51. de S. S. Domn. Ber. Prosd. tom. 1. p. 557.

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Part 2. would give them leave, they unanimously threw themselves into the River, and there perished in the *Waters*. The like he relates of a Noble *Woman* at *Rome*, Wife to the *Prefect*, or chief Governor of the City, (but a Christian) that *Maxentius* the Emperor being passionately enflamed with the love of her, sent Officers to fetch her, who breaking into the House, to the great Terror of her Husband, would violently have seiz'd on her; of whom she beg'd only so much time as that she might a little dress and adorn her self; under which pretence, retiring into her Chamber, she caught up a Sword, and by a fatal Stroak left the Messengers nothing but a dismal Spectacle of Amazement and Horror. These Instances (both of them highly applauded by *Chrysostom* and *Ensebins*) I quote not to justify a man's laying violent hands upon himself as either lawful or laudable; whether in some such cases persons might not be acted by some *divine* motions, extraordinary and *heroick* impulses (the Case of *Sampson*, &c.) as *S. Augustine* inclines to believe, it is not very pertinent for me to enquire; it being enough to my purpose to observe, that

De Civ. D.
lib. 1. c. 26.
Col. 75. ubi
de hac ipse
re agit.

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that they were great Evidences how Part 2.
highly they priz'd *Chastity* and *Integ-
rity*, which they were willing to se-
cure at so dear a rate.

And in those cases wherein Life was
not concern'd, they gave the greatest
testimony how much they abhorred all
Uncleanness. None were ever more
heartly Enemies to *Idolatry*; and yet *Ori-
gen* at *Alexandria* (if that Story be true) *Epiphanius.
Hæres. 64.
p. 228.*
when put to this unhappy choice, either
to *sacrifice* or *defile* himself, chose rather
to commit *Idolatry* than *Fornication*.
Though even that too was rather his
Enemies act than his *own*, they thrusting
the Frankincense into his hand and hail-
ing him up to the *Altar*.

Fifthly, When ever any was found
guilty of the least Uncleanness, it was
look'd upon and *bewail'd* as a very *hei-
nous* Sin, and a great *Dishonor* to the
Christian name: What is it that I hear
(says *Cyprian*) how detestable should it
be to you, what with the greatest grief *Ad Regat.
& Confess.
Ep. 6. p. 15.*
and affliction of my mind I have under-
stood, that there are some amongst you,
who have defil'd their *Bodies*, the *Tem-
ples of God*, even after they were *san-
ctified* by Confession, and *cleans'd* by
Baptism, with filthy and infamous Em-
braces,

Part 2. braces, promiscuously using the Beds and Lodgings of the Women: when although they should be free from *actual* Adultery, yet even in this 'twould be a *fault* of a mighty aggravation, that by their *Scandalous* Example others might be seduced into Ruine. S. Basil writing to a *Monk*, who had been *overtaken* with this *Fault*, elegantly bewails the greatness of his Sin, as a Dishonour to the strictness of his former Profession; a Reproach to those Lips which had *kiss'd* the Mouths of so many *Saints*; to those Hands which so many devout persons had *embrac'd* as pure and undefiled; to those Knees before which so many Servants of God had *fallen down*; as a being caught in the Snare of a crafty *Devil*, a perfidious Violation of his *Promises*, a being become a *Sport* and Scorn to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, a confuting (what in him lay) that Triumphant Speech of *Christ*, that he had *overcome the World*, filling even to the place where he liv'd a Cup of *Infamy* and *Reproach*. In the next Epistle, he deals with the *Woman*, and treats her with the same Elegant Severity, though in both, he so aggravates the Case, as to excite them to Repentance, and to a speedy

*Ad Monac.
lajf. tom. I.
p. 11.*

Ch. 5. Primitibe Christianity. 105

speedy Recovery of themselves out of the Part 2.
Snare of the Devil. But because good words and perswasions were not (Cords strong enough) to restrain some mens irregular lusts and passions, they twisted with them the *Discipline* of the Church: And therefore,

Sixthly, They were wont to punish the breach of Chastity by inflicting severe Penalties upon incontinent persons: Amongst all the Sins that were most sharply punished in the ancient Church, *Adultery* was one of the chief; whoever was convicted of it was immediately cast out of the Church, and disowned as a rotten Member: This *Tertullian* tells us, first made *Marcion* turn *Heretick*, for being found guilty of lying with a Virgin, and for that thrown out of the Communion of the Church, he betook himself to one *Cerdon*, a *Master Heretick*, and espoused his Doctrines and Opinions. The truth is, in those first times the punishment of *Adultery* was very great, perpetual penance all a mans Life, and scarce being admitted into Communion at the very *Hour of Death*; till *Pope Zephyrinus* about the year two hundred and sixteen, considering the great Inconveniencies of

*Vid. Tert.
de Pudicit.
c. 7. p. 560.
de Heres.
p. 120.*

106 Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity.

Part 2. of so much severity, persons hereby being oft driven into *despair*, and others discouraged from coming over to the Christian Faith, ordered that Penance in this case should be limited to a shorter time, which being ended, such persons might be received again into the Bosom of the Church. This Decree gave great Offence to the *African*

Lib. de Pudicit. c. 1. p.

555.

Ad Antonian. Ep. 52.

p. 71, 72.

Churches, most whereof stood up for the strictness of the *Ancient* Discipline.

Tertullian more especially inveighs against it with much Bitterness and Animosity, as a thing *unfit* in it self, and an *Innovation* in the Church. The same,

Cyprian also plainly intimates, though he himself was for the more *mild* Opinion. By the *Ancyran* Council, held

Can. 20.

Anno three hundred and fifteen, it was Decreed, that whoever was guilty of Adultery, should be punished with a *seven years* Penance before they were admitted to the Communion. By the

Can. 7. p.

13.

Synod of *Illiberis*, if a man after having done his Penance for the first fault, fell afterwards into the same Sin again, he was not to be taken into Communion, no, *not* at the Hour of Death.

Can. 12.

p. 22.

The same punishment they inflicted upon *Bawds*, and such persons as for gain

pro-

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prostituted the Bodies of their *Children*, Part 2. by selling them (or *themselves* rather, of whom their Children were a *part*) to Lust and Ruine. *S. Basil* writing to *Amphilochius* rules for the Conduct of Discipline, and the Measures of Repentance, sets Adultery at *fifteen years* Penance, Fornication at *Seven*, and then to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament. His Brother *Gregory* Bishop of *Nyssa*, treating about the same Affairs, appoints Fornication to be punished with no less than *nine years* Penance and Suspension from the Sacrament, and Adultery, and all other Species of Uncleanness with *double* that time; though allowing a Liberty to the *Spiritual Guide* to contract this time, as the Circumstances of the *Case* or *Person* might require. But both these last mentioned being but private Bishops, their *Canons* could be no further Obligatory than to those particular *Dioceses*, that were under their Charge. And indeed their censures of the Church in this Case did much vary according to Time and Place, in some more *rigid* and severe, in others more *laxe* and favourable, though in all, such as did abundantly shew what hearty Enemies they were to all Filthiness

Epist. Can.
58, 59.
tom. 3. p. 36

Ep. Canon.
ad Letoi.
Can. 4. tom.
1. p. 951.

108 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.**

Part 2. **ness and Impurity** whatsoever.

What has been hitherto said of the Modesty, the chaste and sober Carriage of the Primitive Christians, will receive further Light, if we consider how clearly they vindicated themselves from that *malicious* Charge of *Incest* and *Adultery*, which the Heathens commonly charg'd upon them ; so commonly, that we scarce find any of the Ancient *Apologists* but takes notice of it, and confutes it. The Sum of the Charge, as 'tis more formally drawn up by the

Pag. 7, 8. Heathen in *M. Felix*, take thus: That the Christians knew one another by certain *privy* marks and signs, and were wont to be in *love* with, almost before they *knew* one another; that they exercised Lust and Filthiness under a pretence of Religion, promiscuously calling themselves *Brothers* and *Sisters*, that by the help of so *sacred* a Name, their Common Adulteries might become *incestuous* ; that upon a solemn day, they meet together at a Feast [*he means their Love-feasts,*] with their *Wives, Children, Sisters, Mothers*, persons of every *Age* and *Sex*, where after they have well eaten and drunk, and begun to be *warm* and merry, heated with

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 109

with the Excess of Wine, a piece of Part 2.
meat is thrown for the *Dogs*, who being
 tied to the *Candlesticks*, begin to *leap*
 and *frisk* about, till they have run away
 with, and put out the *Lights*, and then
 nothing being left but *Darkness*, the
 fit *Cover* and *Shadow* for *Impudence*
 and *Villany*, they promiscuously run
 amongst one another into filthy and in-
 cestuous Embraces; and if they be not
 all alike guilty of *Incest*, 'tis not the
 fault of their *Will*, but the good For-
 tune of their *Chance*, seeing what actu-
 ally happens to one, is intentionally the
 Lot of all. This is the Tale; which
 however absurd and incredible, yet
 strangely found *Belief*, or at least was
 pretended to be believ'd amongst the
 Enemies of *Christianity*. Now, though
 it be sufficiently refuted by what has
 been already said, yet we may observe
 the Christians of those times further
 pleading these *Four* things in their own
 Vindication.

First, That if the *Charge* had been
 true, yet the *Heathens* had little Rea-
 son to object it to the *Christians*, being
 themselves so notoriously guilty in this
 kind. For *Adultery*, nothing more
 common amongst them; and for *Incest*
 'twas

Tert. Apol.
c. 9. p. 10. c.
39. p. 31.
Min. Fæl.
p. 26.

110 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 2. 'twas a general Indictment of *whole* Nations, the *Persians* usually lying with their own *Mothers*, the *Macedonians* and *Aegyptians* marrying with their own *Sisters*, and this done even at *Athens* it self; their Histories full of them, their Plays and Tragedies which they frequented every day with great Applause, represented them as *lawful* and *commendable*. *Socrates* himself, the great Glory of the Heathen World, was condemned at *Athens*, amongst other things for *Sodomy*, and the corrupting of Youth; and some of *Plato's* School have perished in the very *Act* of Adultery. Nay, their very *Gods* themselves whom they worship'd and ador'd were highly guilty in this kind; they feign those things of *us* (says *Athenagoras*) which they themselves report of their own *Gods*; whose Lusts and Wantonnesses 'tis no wonder if they stile *Mysteries*; were they such hearty Enemies to shameful and promiscuous Mixtures, they must abhor their Great God *Jupiter*, who begot Children both of *Rhea* the *Mother*, and *Proserpina* the *Daughter*, and married with his own *Sister*. And who was (unless *Orpheus* their great *Poet* lies)

more

Tert. lib. c.
46. p. 36.

Legat. pro
Christian. p.
35.

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more wicked and vile in this kind than Part 2.
Thyestes himself? *Clemens Alexandri-*
nus tells them, that as they had order-
 ed the matter, by the *Marriages*, beget-
 ing *Children*, *Adulteries*, and *Banquets*
 of their *Gods* (which they set out in
 their *Plays* and *Poems*) they had turn'd
 Heaven into a *Comick Scene*, and made
 the *Deity* a piece of *Dramatick Sport*,
 and by *Satyrick Wit* had jested *Religi-*
on, and whatever was most *Sacred* in-
 to *Scorn* and *Laughter*. Nothing more
 usual amongst them (as he there ob-
 serves) than to hang their *Rooms* with
 the *Pictures* of their *Gods* drawn in the
 most lascivious and *propudious* postures,
 engaged in the most filthy and disho-
 nest *Actions*, enough to shame *Intempe-*
rance it self. *These (says he) are the*
Original Patterns of your soft Effemina-
cy; this your beastly and shameful Divi-
nity; these the doctrines of your Gods, co-
partners with you in your Uncleanness and
Adultery. And whereasthey might pre-
 tend, that these *Stories* of their *Gods*
 were only the extravagant *Inventions*
 of their *Poets*, who took a *Liberty* to
 say any thing to gratifie the *People*;
Athanasius answers, that hereby they
 shook the very *foundation* of their *Gods*,
 having

Admonit.
ad Græc. p.
 39, 40. *Vi-*
desis Jul.
Firm. de
Err. Prof.
Relig. p. 8.

Orat. contr.
Gent. p. 14.
tom. 1.

112 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 2. having no other authority for their *Existence*, than what Account their *Poets* gave them; so that if they feign'd their *Actions*, they might with equal Reason be supposed to feign their very *Names* and *Persons*, there being the same ground of belief for the one as for the other; and that there was as much reason to believe they spake truth in this, as in the relation of any other matters of Fact, concerning *Achilles*, *Ulysses*, *Nestor*, *Hector*, or any of the rest, all depending upon the same Warrant and Authority. This propagated looseness and Uncleanneſs to them under the notion and shadow of Religion; such as the *Gods* are, such warrantably may be their *Worſhippers*. Where-ever you are (ſays *Tertullian*) at home, or abroad, or beyond the ſeas, *Luſt* is your Companion, which often ſtumbles upon *Inceſt*; Whereas Chſtity diligently and faithfully preſerv'd, keeps us from any ſuch event, and we are as far from *Inceſt*, as we are from *Whoredom*, or any exceſs in a married State; yea, many prevent all poſſibility of this Charge by containing themſelves within perpetual Virginity. And yet though we are thus (ſays another *Apologiſt*) yet there

*Ibid. c. 9.
p. 10.*

*Athenag. ut
ſupr. p. 37.*

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there want not those who object these Part 2.
things to us; and, as 'tis in the Proverb,

ἡ πόρνη τὴν σώφρονα, *The Strumpet reproaches the honest Woman*; for though they

merchandize for Lust, and keep open Shop for all manner of Uncleanneſs,

not abstaining from the Violation and Abuse of Youth, Males with Males com-

mitting that which is unseemly; though themselves are guilty of these Villan-

ies, which they report also of their Gods, and do themselves boast of them

as brave *Atchievements*, yet have they the face to accuse us of them. Adul-

terers and *Sodomites* as they are, they charge us, who are either always contin-

ent, or never marry more than once; themselves in the mean while living

like *Fishes*, where the great ones subdue and swallow up the less. Such infamous

Filthinesses are done amongst you, *M. Fœl. p. 24. B.*

which we do not care to hear, and may much less defend; you laying things to

the Charge of chaste and modest men, which we could not believe that there

should be such things done in the world, were not you your selves *Instances* of

them. This Consideration made *Justin Ap. I. p. 51.*

Martyr thus freely and passionately bespeak the Senate; It were to be wished

H

that

114 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 2. that some body getting up into a high place, should with a loud voice cry out, *Be afraid, be afraid to charge those things of which you your selves are openly guilty, upon the innocent and undeserving; to attribute what belongs only to your selves and to your Gods, to those with whom there is not so much as the Shadow of any such thing to be found. Learn to be more wise and sober, and repent of such Injustice.*

Secondly, That the Heathens themselves did tacitly confess Christians to be innocent in this case, when their great care was how they might debauch them; 'twas a part of their severest Punishment to be prostituted, and exposed to Rudeness and Violence; a Penalty which they would never have inflicted upon them, had they really been such lewd profligate persons as their Enemies endeavoured to represent them. This Plea Tertullian urges in the close of his Apology; Condemn, (says he) crucifie and torment us; your Cruelty and Injustice is the Evidence of our Innocency, and therefore God suffers it to come upon us: For while you chuse rather to condemn a Woman that is a Christian to the Stews than to the

Cult. p. 40.

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the *Lyons*, you plainly confess, that the Part 2.
Violation of Chastity is accounted by us
a *heavier* penalty than any punishment *Ad Leonem*
or kind of Death which you can inflict *nam quam*
upon us. *ad Leonem.*

An eminent Instance hereof (though
of the other Sex) *S. Hierom* relates to
this purpose: In the time of the *De-*
cian Persecution, a young Man, a *Chri-*
stian, then in the flower and beauty of *Vit. Pauli*
his Age, whose Constancy had been oft *Eremit.*
attempted by other means to no pur-
pose, he was at last set upon in this man-
ner; he was carried into a pleasant
Garden, and into a part of it beset with
Lilies and *Roses* hard by the Banks of
a *crystal* River, whose soft *Murmurs*,
together with the *Musick* made by the
Leaves of the Trees, wav'd by the gentle
motions of the Wind, conspir'd to ren-
der it a place for *Pleasure* and *Delight* ;
here upon a *Bed of Down* the young man
was laid; and that he might not be
able to help himself, or shift his Po-
sture, was tied down with *silken* Cords:
the Company withdrawing, a beautiful
Strumpet was sent in to him, who began
to caress him with Kisses and Em-
braces, treating him with all the Arts of
Wantonness, not consistent with *Mo-*

116 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 2. *ſty* to name. How to relieve himſelf in this caſe the poor man knew not ; but finding the Temptation beginning to prevail, he preſently bit off his *Tongue*, and *ſpit* it in her Face as ſhe attempted to *kifs* him, by the greatneſs of his pain extinguishing thoſe *ſenſual* Titillations which her wicked Artifices began to kindle in him.

Thirdly, They confidently aſſured them, that amongſt *Chriſtians* it was not only unlawful to be *actually* unclean, but to look after a Woman with wanton
Ap. 2. p. 61, and uncaſt Deſires. Our Lord (ſays *Juſtin Martyr*) has told us that whoſo-
62. ever looks after a Woman to *luſt* after her, has already committed *Adultery* with her in his *Heart* ; and that *if our right eye offend us we muſt pluck it out* : As therefore Humane Laws condemn two Wives, ſo by the Laws of our *Maſter* they are Sinners who look upon a Woman with *unfit* Deſires after her ; for not only he that really commits *Adultery* is rejected by him, but even he that has a *mind* to it ; not only our *Actions*, but our very *Thoughts* being open unto God : So *Athenagoras*. So far are we from any promiſcuous Embraces, that we are not permitted

ut ſupra
p. 36.

Ch. 5. Primitibe Christianity. 117

ted the Freedom of an unchaste Look; Part 2.
for, *Whoever* (says our Lord) *looks after a Woman to desire her, has plaid the Adulterer with her in his Heart.* We are not therefore allowed to use our Eyes to any other purposes, than those for which God created them, *viz.* to be *lights* to the Body. To abuse them to Wantonness, is to be guilty of Adultery, forasmuch as they know they were made for other ends, and cannot but be conscious to themselves of their own Thoughts; and how is it possible for Men under such *limitations* to be otherwise than chaste and sober? For we have not to deal with *Humane* Laws, under which a man may be wicked, and yet escape; but our Discipline was delivered by God himself; we have a Law, which makes our *selves* the *Rule* and Measure of *Righteousness* towards others. According therefore to the difference of Age we account some as *Sons* and *Daughters*, others as *Brethren* and *Sisters*; the more Aged we honour in the place of *Parents*; those therefore whom we account as *Sisters*, or as allied to us in any other Relation, we reckon it a matter of great Concernment that

H 3

they

118 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

Part 2. they should be chaste and incorrupt.

Fourthly, They pleaded that this Objection would easily vanish, if they would but consider what a strange *change* and alteration was in this very case wrought upon persons at their first *conversion* to Christianity; immediately becoming quite of another spirit and temper from what they were before. We who before-time (says *Justin Martyr*, speaking of the converting Power of the *Christian Doctrine*) did please our selves in *fornications* and Uncleanness, do now solely embrace Temperance and Chastity: what an innumerable Company could I name of those who have left their Luxury and Intemperance, and come over to this kind of Life; for *Christ came, not to call the chaste and righteous*, [they needed it not] *but the Wicked, the Incontinent and the Unrighteous, to Repen-*
tance. And in his other *Apology*, he gives an Instance of a Woman, who having together with her Husband, lived a very *vicious* and debauched Course of Life, after her Conversion to Christianity, became strictly chaste and sober; and not content with this, she urged her Husband also to do the like,
lay-

Ap. 2. p. 61,
62.

Ap. 1. p. 41.

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 119

laying before him the doctrines of Christianity; and persuading him both by the rewards and punishments of another World; but he obstinately refusing, it begot a quarrel between them, which still ripen'd into a wider Breach, till it became matter of publick Cognizance, and was an occasion for *Justin Martyr* to write that excellent *Apology* for the Christians. Upon this account *Tertulian* justly condemns the Madness of the Heathens, and their unreasonable p̄ejudice against Christianity, that they would *hate* their nearest Relations meerly for being *Christians*, though they saw how much they were every ways *bettered* by it in their Lives and Manners.. The Father *dis-inheriting* his Son, of whom now he had *no* cause left to complain, but that he was a *Christian*: the Master *imprisoning* his Servant, though now he had found him useful and necessary to him. But (what's more especially to the purpose) he tells us of some Husbands he knew, who though before so infinitely *jealous* of their Wives (and possibly not without reason) that a *Mouſe* could not stir in the Room, but it must be a *Gallant* creeping to their Bed; yet when upon

Ad Nation.
L. 1. c. 4.
p. 43.

Part 2. their turning Christians they became so eminently reserved, chaste and modest, that there was not the least foundation for Suspicion, their *Jealousie* was converted into *Hatred*, and they vow'd they had rather their Wives should be *Strumpets* than *Christians*. So obstinately (says he) do men stand in their own *Light*, and contend against those Advantages which they might reap by Christianity. This Argument from the powerful and successful Influence of the Christian Faith, *Origen* frequently makes use of it; They must needs (says he) confess the Excellency and *Divinity* of Christ's Doctrine, whoever do but look into the *Lives* of those that adhere to it, comparing their former Course of Life with that which they now lead, and considering in what Impurities, Lusts and Wickednesses, every one of them wallowed before they embraced this Doctrine; but since that they entertained it, how much more Grave, Moderate, and Constant are they become? Insomuch that some of them out of a desire of a more *transcendent* Purity, and that they may worship God with a chaster Mind, deny themselves even the Pleasures of a
law-

Ad Cel. l.
1. p. 21.

Ch. 5. **Primitive Christianity.** 121

lawful Bed. The same he affirms else- Part 2.
where, that those whom the Gentiles *Lib. 7. p.*
scorn'd as the most rude and sottish 365
persons, being once initiated into the
Faith and Discipline of the Holy *Jesus*,
were so far from Lasciviousness, Filthi-
ness, and all manner of Uncleaness,
that (like *Priests* wholly devoted to
God) they altogether abstain even from
allowed Embraces; that there was no
need for them (as some of the best a-
mong the *Gentiles* have done) to use
Arts and *Medicines* to keep them
chaste; not *Guardians* set over them
to preserve their Virginity; the Word
of God being sufficient to expell and
drive out all irregular Appetites and
Desires. This also *Tertullian* observes
as the incomparable Excellency of the *Ap. c. 46. p.*
Christian Doctrine above that of the 36.
best Philosophers, that whenas *Demo-*
critus was forc'd to put out his eyes, be-
cause not able to defend himself from
the Charms of Beauty; a Christian
could *look* upon a Woman with chaste
unseduced eyes, being at the sametime
inwardly *blind* as to any Temptation
from his Lust. With such a mighty force
did the Gospel come and captivate
mens Hearts into the obedience of the
truth.

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Part 2. truth. Thence *Lactantius* makes this triumphant Challenge, where discourfing of the prevalency which the commands of God had upon the minds of men, as daily experience did demonstrate; Give me (says he) a man that's angry, furious, and passionate; and with a few words from God, I'll render him as meek and quiet as a Lamb: Give me one that's lustful, filthy and vicious, and you shall see him sober, chaste and continent: the same he instances in most other Vices. So great (says he) is the power of the Divine Wisdom, that being infused into the breast of a man, it will soon expell that folly which is the grand parent of all Vice and Wickedness.

*Contr. Cels.
L. 6o p.
293, 294.*

The innocency of Christians standing thus clear from this wicked imputation, it may not be amiss before we conclude to enquire a little into the rise and original of this absurd and malicious Charge. *Origen* fathers it upon the Jews, as if they had falsely and spitefully invented it (as they did other things) to disgrace and prejudice Christianity, and he tells us that in some measure it succeeded accordingly, keeping many at a distance from the Christian Religion; and that even in his time there

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there were some who for this very Part 2. reason would have no *discourse* or *commerce* with a *Christian*. But though both *Jew* and *Gentile* had Malice and Spite enough against the *Christians*, yet I can hardly think that it was a *purely invented* falshood; but that it had some ground of pretence, though ill applied; and so we shall find it had; for which we are to know that in the most early times of Christianity there were several sorts of *Hereticks* (who though they had their particular names, yet all call'd themselves *Christians*, accounting that hereby they *grac'd* and honour'd their party (as *Epiphanius* tells us) the followers of *Simon Magnus*, *Mendander*, *Marcion*, *Marcus*, *Basilides*, &c. who all went under the general name of *Gnosticks*, and were under the pretence of Religion guilty of the most prodigious Villanies, and particularly those we are speaking of. *Irenæus* reports of them, that they gave up themselves to all filthiness and bestiality, not only privately *corrupting* the women whom they had enveigled into their Sect (as some of them returning after to the Church, *confessed* with shame and sorrow) but openly and with bare face

*Heret. 29.
p. 58.*

*Adv. Heret. lib. 1. c. 1. p. 28.
vid. etiam. c. 9. p. 70.
&c. 32.
p. 132.*

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Part 2. face *marrying* the Women whom they had *seduced* from their Husbands; committing the most execrable Wickednesses, and *laughing* at the pious and *Orthodox* Christians, whom the *Fear of God* restrained from sin either in word or thought, as a Company of *ignorant* and *silly* Fellows; magnifying themselves, styling themselves *perfect*, and *the seeds of Election*. And much more in other places to the same purpose, where he gives account of the Prophane and Hellish Rites of their Assemblies. Of the *Carpocratians*, another Gang of those

Strom. l. 3. p. 430. *brutish* Hereticks. *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates the same both as to their Doctrines and Practises, reporting the matter almost in the very same Circumstances wherein it is charg'd upon the Christians by the Heathen in *Min. Felix*, viz. that both Men and Women used to meet at *Supper*, (which they had in imitation of the true *Christian ἀγάπη*, or *Love-feast*) where after they had loaded themselves with a plentiful Meal, to prevent all shame (if they had any remain'd) they put out the *Lights*, and then promiscuously mix'd in Filthiness with one another, or else each sorting as they pleas'd. And of the

Gno-

Ch. 5. Primitive Christianity. 125

Gnosticks Epiphanius tells us, that they Part 2.
had their Wives in *common*, and if any Her. 26. p. 42.
Stranger of their Party came to them,
both Men and Women had this *Mark*
and *Sign* to know one another by ;
stretching out their *Hands* by way of
Salutation; they used to *tickle* each o-
ther in the *ball* of the Hand, by which
they were satisfied that the Stranger
really was of their Gang and Party.
Amongst their Brethren the *Carpocra-* ib. Her. 27. p. 51.
tians, they were wont to mark their
Disciples and Profelytes under the *right*
ear with a Brand, a Slit, or a Hole, that
they might the more readily discern
them; (this agrees exactly with the
Charge of the Heathens, that they *knew*
one another at the first *sight* by privy
Marks and Signs;) and having thus
own'd and receiv'd each other, they
went to their Luxurious Feasts, and to
those horrid Brutishnesses that followed
after.

Now this being the case with these
Abominable Wretches, who yet had the
face to call themselves *Christians*, it is
no wonder if *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who
were greedy of any occasion to bespat-
ter and reproach *Christians*, and rather
than not find an occasion, would *make*
one,

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Part 2. one, charg'd it upon all Christians, either not knowing it to be otherwise, or if they did, not willing to *distinguish* between true and false. And that this was the true and only rise and ground of the Charge, besides some intimations of it in *Justin Martyr*, we have it expressly asserted by *Eusebius*, as that which gave Being to that absurd and impious Opinion, which spread so fast among the Heathens, of the Christians being guilty of promiscuous mixtures, to the great reproach and infamy of the *Christian* name. I do not deny but this malicious report might receive strength and *Encouragement* from the Servants of some Christians, who being rack'd by the Heathens, might confess what they put into their mouths, and this Charge amongst the rest. This the same *Historian* relates out of the Letters of the Churches in *France*: Certain Gentiles, who were Servants to some Christians, being apprehended, and having seen the exquisite Torments which the Christians were put to, for fear of the like, did at the *instance* of the Souldiers, who urg'd them to it, confess, that the Christians had amongst them *incestuous* Mixtures, and Suppers fur-

Ap. 2. p. 56.
60.

Hist. Eccl.
l. 4. c. 7. p.
120.

Lib. 5. c. 1.
p. 156.

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furnish'd with *Man's* Flesh, laying such Part 2.
things to their Charge as they held unlawful to *speake* or *think* of, or could *believe* were ever done by Men: which being once divulg'd, they every where fell upon the Christians with the greatest rage and fierceness. So in the persecution under *Maximinus*, one of the Commanders that then resided at *Damascus*, laid hold of a few light inconsiderable *Women* in the Market, and threatening them with the Rack, forc'd the Wretches publickly to confess that they had formerly been Christians, and that they knew all their *Villanies*, that in their Religious Meetings they committed the most beastly Actions; and indeed whatever else he would have them say that might disgrace Christianity. This *Confession* of theirs he caused to be entred into the publick Records, and then transmitted it to the *Emperour*, by whose Command it was immediately *published* in all Cities and Places of the Empire. So industriously did the Malice of Men and Devils bend all the *Nerves* of their power and subtilty (though in vain) either wholly to suppress, or at least to *dishearten* and baffle out the Christians. Which brings
me

*Id. l. 9. c. 34.
p. 350.*

Part 2. me to the consideration of another Virtue no less remarkable in the *Christians* of those Times.

CHAP. VI.

Of their Readiness and Constancy
in Professing their Religion.

Their Courage and Undauntedness in professing the Truth, though reproach'd and persecuted. Their open and resolute owning it to the face of their Enemies, and in defiance of the greatest Dangers. The Story of Victorinus the Rhetorician converted by Simplician. The free and impartial Answers of Maris to Julian, of Basil to the Arian Governor. Polycarp's refusing to fly when Officers were sent to apprehend him. His resolute Carriage before the Proconsul. The like of Cyprian. No Torments could make them deny Christ. Women unconquerable. The excellent Instance of Blandina and others. Divers voluntarily offering themselves. Others offering to plead the Cause of the Christians, though with the immediate

h. 6. Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 129

mediate hazard of their Lives. This Part 2.
Boldness and Resolution noted as an argument of the Excellency of their Religion, and the Goodness of their Cause above that of the best Philosophers. Aristoteles flying for fear of Suffering for his Opinions. The cowardly Silence of Iamblichus his Scholars. This Resolution of theirs, confessed by Heathens, Pliny, Apollo's Oracle in the case of Porphyry's Wife, Galen. The Constancy of Christians to their Religion, Proverbial.

WHen our Blessed Saviour sent out his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he acquainted them with the *difficulties* that were like to attend their Message; but withal, bad them arm themselves with *Constancy* and *Resolution*, and not to regard the Scoffs and Reproaches, the Miseries and Sufferings that might fall upon them; *not to fear them that could only kill the Body*, but to make a free and bold *Confession* of his Name before the World, and chearfully to *take up their Cross*, and *follow him*. And St. Paul, though himself then in Chains at Rome, exhorts the Christians to *stand fast in one spirit*,

I with

130 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 6.

Part 2. *with one mind striving together for the Faith of the Gospel, being in nothing terrified by their Adversaries, it being given them on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake*; which made it very necessary for them to have their Feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. And certainly, if ever true Courage and Greatness of Mind appeared in any persons in the World, it was in the Christians of those times, who with such a generous and unterrified Mind defied dangers and torments, own'd and gloried in the profession of Christianity against all the Threats, Reproaches, and Persecutions, which the worst of their Adversaries could make against them. We shall first see what account their Apologists give of it even before their Enemies, and then how they made it good in their Lives and Actions.

Ap. 2. p. 83. Justin Martyr speaking of the successful Propagation of the Gospel, immediately upon Christ's Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, The Apostles of Christ (says he) going forth from Jerusalem, preach'd the powerful word in every place; although it were Capital either to preach or to profess the Name

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Name of *Christ*, which yet we do eve- Part 24
ry where embrace and teach: which if
you (as Enemies) still go on to obstruct,
the worst you can do is but to *kill* us,
whereby you will do us no great harm,
but will purchase to your selves, and
to all those that unjustly persecute us,
and persist impenitent in their Proceed-
ings, the *Vengeance* of Eternal Flames.
And when *Trypho* the Jew had charg'd
Christianity for an idle Story, and the
Christians for no better than *Fools* to
quit all the Conveniencies of this life
upon the account of it; the *Martyr*
answers, that this proceeded from his
Ignorance, and an implicit Assent to the
absurd and malicious Insinuations of
their *Rabbins*, who understood very
little of the *Scriptures*; that would he
but admit the true reasons of *Chri-*
stianity, he would quickly understand
how far they were from being in an Er-
ror, and how little reason they had
to quit their Profession; although men
did sufficiently scorn and reproach them
for it, and the Powers of the World
endeavor to force them to renounce
and forsake it: Notwithstanding all
which they chose rather to die, and
cheerfully underwent it; being ful-

Dial. cum
Tryph. p.
226.

ib. p. 232.
D.

132 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 6.

Part 2. ly assur'd, that what *God* had *promised* through *Christ*, he would infallibly make good to them. And discoursing afterwards of the same matter, As for us (says he) that have entertain'd the Religion of the Holy *Jesus*, your selves know very well, that there's none throughout the world that's able to *subdue* or *affright* us out of our Profession; nothing being plainer, than that though our Heads be expos'd to *Swords* and *Axes*, our Bodies fastned to the *Cross*, though thrown to *wild Beasts*, harassed out with *chains*, *fire*, and all other Instruments of *Torment*, yet do we not start from our Profession: Nay, the more these things happen to us, the faster others flock over to the Name of *Jesus*, and become pious and devout Followers of *Christ*, it being with us in this case as with a *Vine*, which being *prun'd* and *trimm'd*, and its luxurious excrescences par'd off, brings forth more fruitful and flourishing Branches. How little he valued any danger in competition with the Truth, he tells his Adversary he might know by this, that he would not stifle and conceal it, although they should immediately tear him in pieces for it; and therefore when

16. p. 337.

16. p. 349.

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when he saw his Country-men the *Samaritans* seduc'd by the Impostures of *Simon Magus*, whom they held to be a *God above all Principality and Power*, he could not but by an Address make his Complaint to *Cæsar*, not regarding the Hazards and Troubles that might ensue upon it. *Tertullian* giving the Heathens an account of that Christ whom they worshipped, tells them they might well believe it to be true; for that no man might lie for his Religion, to *dissemble* in this case being to *deny*; a thing which could not be charg'd upon the *Christians*, who own'd and stood to it with their last drop of Blood. *We speak it* (says he) *and we speak it openly, yea, while you are tearing our flesh, and shedding our blood, we cry aloud, that we worship God through Christ.* So fully were they satisfied in the truth of their Religion, as to be ready rather a thousand times to *die*, than to *deny* it.

Nor were these merely *big words* with which the Christians vapor'd in the sight of their Enemies, we shall find that they made them good by *act-ing* suitable to these Professions and Protestations. They did not then think

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Part 2. it enough to espouse the Faith of *Christ*, unless they publickly testified it to the World; whereof this Instance amongst others: *Victorinus* a *Rhetorician* of *Rome*, a Man of so great Note and Fame, that he had obtain'd the Honor of a Publick Statue, but a Zealous Defender of *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, had read the Holy Scriptures, by which being convinc'd he came to *Simplician*, and privately told him that he was a *Christian*; which the other refus'd to believe unless he saw him testifie it in the publick Church; to which *Victorinus* returned with a little Scorn, *What are they then the Walls that make a Christian?* This Answer he has oft returned as the other urg'd a publick Confession, for he was not willing to disoblige his great friends who he knew would fall foul upon him; till by Reading and Meditation he gathered Courage, and fearing that *Christ* would deny him before the *Holy Angels*, if he should refuse to confess him before men, he became sensible of his Fault, and was asham'd of his Vanity and Folly, and calling to *Simplician*, *Let us go* (said he) *into the Church, I will now become a Christian*; which when he had done, and had been

tho-

Aug. Conf.
l. 8. c. 2.
tom. 1. col.
136, 137.

Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 135

thorowly instructed in the Faith of Part 2. *Christ*, he offer'd himself to Baptism; and being to make the accustomed *confession* of his Faith, the Ministers of the Church offer'd him the liberty of doing it in a more *private* way, (as they were wont to do for those who were of a fearful and bashful temper) which he utterly refused, and openly made it before all the people; affirming it to be unreasonable that he should be ashamed to confess his *Hopes* of Salvation before the people, who while he taught *Rhetorick* (wherein he hoped for no such reward) had publicly professed it every day. An Action that begat great wonder in *Rome*, as it was no less matter of rejoycing to the Church. No Dangers could then sway good Men from doing of their Duty. *Cyprian* highly commends *Cornelius* for taking the Bishoprick of *Rome* upon him in so dangerous a time; for the Greatness of his Mind, and the unshaken Firmness of his Faith, and the undaunted Managery of his Place, at a time when *Decius* the Tyrant threatned such heavy severities to the Ministers of Christianity, and would sooner endure a *Corrival* in the Empire, than a *Bishop* to sit at *Rome*.

*Ad Anto.
m. epist.
52. p. 68.*

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Part 2. How freely, how impartially did they speak their minds, even to the Faces of their bitterest Enemies? When *Maris* Bishop of *Chalcedon*, a man blind with Age, met *Julian* the Emperor, he boldly charged him with his *Atheism* and *Apostasy* from the Christian Faith; *Julian* reproached him with his *blindness*, and told him his *Galilean* God would never cure him. To which the good old man presently answered, *I thank my God who has taken away my sight, that I might not behold the face of one that has laps'd into so great Impiety.*

*Naz. Orat.
in Jul. 1. p.
75.*

Were they at any time attempted by Arts of *Flattery* and *Enticement*, the Charms would not take place upon them. So when *Julian*, both by himself and the Officers of his Army set upon the Souldiers, and by fair Promises of Preferments and Rewards, sought to fetch them off from Christianity, though he prevail'd upon some few weak and instable minds, yet the far greatest part stood off; yea by many even of the *meanest* and most inconsiderable Quality, his *Temptations* were as resolutely beaten back, as the *Blow* of an Engine is by a Wall of *Marble*. Nor were they any more shaken by Storms and

Ch.6. Primitive Christianity. 137

and Threatnings. When *Modestus* the Part 2.
 Governour under *Valens* the *Arian* Id. in laud.
 Emperour could not by any means Basil. Orat.
 bring over St. *Basil* to the Party, he 20. p. 349.
 threatned him with Severity; Dost 350.
 thou not fear this Power that I have?
 Why should I fear, said *Basil*, what canst
 thou do, or what can I suffer? The
 other answered, the loss of thy *Estate*,
Banishment, *Torment*, and *Death*. But
 threaten us with something else, if
 thou canst (said *Basil*) for none of these
 things can reach us; Confiscation of
Estate cannot hurt him that has no-
 thing to lose, unless thou wantest these
tatter'd and thread-bare Garments, and
 a few *books*, wherein all my *Estate* lies;
 nor can I be properly *banished*, who
 am not tied to any place; wherever I
 am 'twill be my Countrey, the whole
Earth is Gods, in which I am but a *Pil-*
grim and a Stranger. I fear no *Torments*,
 my Body not being able to hold out
 beyond the first Stroak; and for *Death*,
 'twill be a *kindness* to me; for 'twill but
 so much the sooner send me unto *God*,
 for whose sake I live, and am indeed in
 a great measure already dead, towards
 which I have been a long time hastning.
 And there's no reason to wonder at
 this

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Part 2. this *freedom* of Speech, in other things we are meek and yielding ; but when the *Cause of God* and Religion is concerned, over-looking all other things, we direct our Thoughts only unto him ; and then *Fire* and *Sword*, *wild Beasts* and *Engines* to tear off our flesh, are so far from being a *Terror*, that they are rather a *pleasure* and Recreation to us. Reproach and threaten, and use your Power to the utmost, yet let the Emperor know, that you shall never be able to make us assent to your *wicked Doctrine*, no though you should threaten ten thousand times worse than all this. The Governor was strangely surpriz'd with the Spirit and Resolution of the Man, and went and told the Emperor, *That one poor Bishop was too hard for them all*. And indeed so big were their Spirits with a desire to assert and propagate their Religion, that they would not hide their Heads to decline the greatest Dangers. When the Officers were sent to apprehend St. *Polycarp*, and had with great Industry and Cruelty found out the place where he was, though he had timely notice to have escaped by going into another house, yet he refus'd, saying,

Euseb. Hist.
Ecdl. l. 4. c.
15. p. 130.

Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 139

ing, *the Will of the Lord be done* ; and Part 2.

coming down out of his Chamber, saluted the Officers with a chearful and pleasant Countenance : as they were carrying him back, two persons of Eminency and Authority met him in the way, took him up into their Chariot, labour'd by all means to persuade him to do *sacrifice* ; which when he absolutely refus'd, after all their Importunities, they turn'd their *kindness* into *Reproaches*, and tumbled him with so much violence out of the Chariot, that he was sorely *bruised* with the fall ; but nothing daunted, as if he had received no harm ; he chearfully went on his way, a voice being heard as he went along, as it were from Heaven, *Polycarp, be strong, and quit thy self like a Man*. When he came before the Tribunal, the *Proconsul* asked him whether he was *Polycarp* ? which he presently confessed ; then he attempted by all Arts of Persuasion to urge him to *deny Christ*, or to do but something that might look like it ; but all in vain : *These fourscore and six Years* (says he) *have I serv'd Christ, and he never did me any harm ; and how then can I blaspheme my Master and my Saviour ?* Being

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Part 2. ing urg'd to swear by the Emperor's *Genius*, he replied, Forasmuch as thou pressest me to do this, pretending thou knowest not who I am, know, *I am a Christian*; then the *Proconsul* told him, he would throw him to the *wild beasts*, unless he alter'd his Opinion: Call for them (answer'd *Polycarp*) for we have no mind to change from *better to worse*: as counting that change only to be honest and laudable, which is from *Vice* to *Vertue*. But if thou makest so light of Wild Beasts (added the *Proconsul*) I'll have a *Fire* that shall tame thee. To which the good old man return'd, You threaten, Sir, a Fire that will burn for an *hour*, and presently be *extinguish'd*; but know not, that there is a Fire of *Eternal* Damnation in the Judgment to come, reserv'd for the punishment of all wicked Men; but why delay you? Execute whatever you have a mind to. This, and much more to the same purpose he discoursed of, to the great Admiration of the *Proconsul*; being so far from being terrified with what was said to him, that he was filled with Joy and Chearfulness; and a certain Grace and Loveliness over-spread his Face.

So

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Solikewise when Cyprian was brought Part 2.
before the *Proconsul*; Thou art (said *Act. Passi-*
he) *Thascius Cyprian*, who hast been a *on. Cypr. in*
Ring-leader to men of a *wicked Mind*; *vit. ejus p.*
the Emperor commands thee to do Sa- 17.
crifice, and therefore consult thy Wel-
fare. To which he answered, *I am Cy-*
prian, I am a Christian, and I cannot
sacrifice to your Gods; do therefore what
you are commanded: as for me, in so just
a Cause there needs no Consultation.
And when the Sentence was pronoun-
ced against him, he cried out, *I hearti-*
ly thank Almighty God, who is pleased to
free me from the Chains of this Earthly
Carcase. Had Torments and the very
Extremities of Cruelty been able to
sink their Courage, it had soon been
trodden under foot; but it was Tri-
umphant in the midst of Torments, and
lift up its Head *higher*, the greater the
Loads that were laid upon it; where-
of there are Instances enough in the
Histories of the Church: nay, in this
Triumph, even the *weaker Sex* bore no
inconsiderable part. *Eusebius* tells us *Hist. Eccl.*
(among others that suffered in the *l. c. 1. p.*
French Persecution under *M. Aurelius*) 157.
of one *Blandina*, a good Woman, but
of whom the Church was afraid how
she

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Part; 2. she would hold out to make a resolute Confession, by reason of the weakness of her Body, and the tenderness of her education, that when she came to't, she bore up with such invincible magnanimity, that her tormentors, though they took their turns from morning to night, and plied her with all kinds of racks and tortures, were yet forced to *give over*, and confess themselves *overcome*, wondring that a Body so broken and mangled should yet be able to draw its Breath. But this noble *Athleta* gain'd strength by suffering, she eased and refreshed her self, and mitigated the sence of present pain by repeating these words, *I am a Christian*, and, *no evil is done by us*. Nor did they only generously bear these things

πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐπιστάμενοι, ὡς ἐμολογήσαντες μὲν χριστιανισμόν, ἀποδιδόντα γὰρ ἁρνησάμενοι δὲ ἀπολυθῆναι, καὶ τὰ ἀπάρχοντα ἀπολήθονται, κατεφρόνησαν μὲν τῷ βίῳ, ἐκείνης δὲ τὴν ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας θάνατον εἰλοντο. Orig. contr. Cels. l. 2.

P. 71.

for the sake of their Religion, when they were laid upon them, but many times freely offered themselves, confessing themselves to be *Christians*, when they knew that their Confession would cost their Lives. So did those Noble *Martyrs*, whom *Eusebius* saw at *Thebais*, Multitudes having been executed every day with all imaginable Cruelties; Sentence was

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was no sooner pass'd against one Party Part 2. of them, but others presented themselves before the *Tribunal*, and confessed that they were Christians, receiving the fatal Sentence with all possible expressions of Chearfulness and rejoicing. The same which he also reports of six *De Martyr. Palest. c. 3. p. 321.* Young Men that suffered in *Palestine*, spontaneously addressing themselves to the Governor of the *Province*, owning that they were Christians, and ready to undergo the severest punishments. In the *Acts* of S. *Cyprian's* Passion, *ubi supra p. 16.* we are told, that the President having caus'd a mighty *Furnace* to be filled with *burning lime*, and *fire* with heaps of *Frankincense* round about the brim of it, gave the Christians this choice, either to *burn* the *Frankincense* in Sacrifice to *Jupiter*, or to be thrown into the *Furnace*; whereupon three hundred Men being arm'd with an unconquerable Faith, and confessing *Christ* to be the *Son of God*, leaped into the midst of the fiery *Furnace*, with whose Fumes and Vapors they were immediately suffocated and swallowed up.

There wanted not some, who in the hottest Persecutions durst venture to undertake the Cause of *Christians*, and

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Part 2. to plead it before the face of their bitterest Enemies: thus did *Vettius Epagathus*, a man full of Zeal and Piety, who seeing his Fellow-Christians unjustly dragged before the Judgment Seat, required leave of the *President*, that he might plead his Brethrens Cause, and openly shew, that they were not guilty of the least Wickedness and Impiety; but not daring to grant him so reasonable a request, the Judge took the advantage of asking him whether he was a *Christian*? which he publickly owning, was adjudged to the same

Enf. l. 5. c. 1. p. 155.

Is. l. 6. c. 2. p. 204.

Martyrdom with the rest. Of *Origen* we read, that though then but eighteen years of Age, yet he was wont not only to wait upon the *Martyrs* in Prison, but to attend upon them at their Trials, and the times of their Execution, kissing and embracing them, and boldly preaching and professing the Faith of Christ, insomuch that had he not been many times miraculously preserved, the *Gentiles* had pelted him to death with Stones; for they mortally hated him for his industrious and undaunted Propagation of the Faith. Nay, when but a Boy, and his Father *Leontius* was seized upon, he wrote to his

Is. c. 2. p. 202.

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his Father most earnestly pressing him Part 2.
to persevere unto Martyrdom, and not
to concern himself what might become
of his Wife and Children, nor for their
sakes to decline that excellent cause he
was engaged in.

By this free and chearful undergoing
the greatest miseries rather than deny
or prejudice their Religion, Christians
evidently demonstrated the Good-
ness of their Principles, and shewed
they were no such persons as their ene-
mies commonly look'd upon them; that
a Christian (as *Ignatius* observes) is Epist. ad
Roman.
not the Child of *Fancy* and Persuasion,
but of true *Gallantry* and Greatness of P. 57.
Spirit, having so much hatred of the
World to grapple and contend with.
Those who are Malefactors (as *Tertul-* Apol. c. 1.
P. 2.
lian argues) desire to be concealed, and
shun to appear; being apprehended,
they tremble; being accused, they de-
ny; being racked, do not easily, nor
always confess the truth; however be-
ing condemn'd, they are sad, search
into and censure themselves, are un-
willing to acknowledge their wicked-
nesses to be their own, and according-
ly impute them either to their *Fate*,
or *Stars*. But what is there like this,

K

to

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Part 2. to be found in *Christians*? Amongst them no man is *asham'd*, none *repents* him of being a Christian, unless it be that he was no sooner so: if marked out, he *glories*, if accused, he stands not to *defend* himself; being interrogated, he confesses of his own accord; being condemned, he gives Thanks: What evil then can there be in this, which is so far from having any shadow of *Evil*, any *Fear*, *Shame*, *Tergiversation*, *Repentance*, *Deplorableness* to attend it? What Evil can that be, of which he that is guilty *rejoyces*? Of which to be accused is their *Vote* and *Desire*; and for which to be punished, is their *Happiness* and *Felicity*? This likewise *Arnobius* lays down as a grand Evidence of the Divinity of the Christian Faith, that in so short a time it had conquered so much of the World, subdued men of the greatest Parts and Learning, made them willing to quit their belov'd *Opinions*, to forfeit their *Estates*, to part with their *Ease* and *Pleasures*, and to submit to torments rather than violate the Faith of *Christ*, or start from the *Station* they had entred upon. By this excellent Temper and Carriage they admirably triumphed over the best men

Adv. gent.
lib. 2. p. 21.

Ch. 6. Primitive Christianity. 147

men amongst the *Gentiles*, none of Part 2. whom durst engage so deep for the defence of their dearest Sentiments as the *Christians* did for theirs; witness *Plato*, who set up the *Academy*, and brought in an *obscure* and *ambiguous* way of delivering his opinions, lest by speaking out he should fall under the Sentence and the fate of *Socrates*. Thus *Origen* puts *Celsus* in mind of *Aristotle*, who understanding, that the *Athenians* intended to call him to account for some of his (as they thought them) *un-orthodox* Opinions, immediately remov'd his School, saying to his Friends, *Let's be gone from Athens, lest we give them an occasion of being guilty of a second Wickedness, like to that which they committed against Socrates, and lest they again offend against the Majesty of Philosophy*: it being alas, not kindness to the *Athenians*, but cowardise and fear of punishment, made him so hastily pack up and be gone, and leave his Opinions behind him to shift for themselves as well as they could. Nay, *Eunapius* himself confesses that in the time of *Constantine*, when *Paganism* began to go down the wind, and *Christianity* to be advanced and honoured, their best Phi-

*Cont. Cels.
lib. 2. 51.*

*In vit. A-
d. fil. p. 33.*

148. Primitive Christianity. Ch. 6.

Part 2. Philosophers, the great Scholars of *Iamblicus*, took Sanctuary at a mysterious *secrecy*, and wisely kept their *Dogmata* and Opinions to themselves, sealed up under a profound and religious Silence. No, they were the Christians only, the very *meanest* of whom durst stand by and defend *naked truth* in the Face of Danger and Death it self; this being (as *Eusebius* notes) one of the most wonderful things in *Christian Religion*, that they who embrace it, are not only ready to profess it in words, but entertain it with such a mighty Affection and Sincerity of Soul, as willingly to prefer the bearing Testimony to it even before Life it self. And indeed this piece of right is done them by *Pliny* himself, where speaking of some, who having been accused for *Christians*, to shew how far they were from it, readily *blasphemed Christ*, and *sacrificed* to the Gods; he adds, *none of which 'tis said that they who are truly Christians, can by any means be compelled to do*. Nay thus much is confessed by the Oracle it self, for when *Porphry* the great Philosopher, and acute Enemy of the Christians, enquired of *Apollo's Oracle* what God he should make his address to for the

*Hist. lib. 1.
c. 3. p. 14.*

*Epist. 97.
lib. 10.*

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the recovery of his *Wife* back from Part 2^d Christianity, the Oracle returned him this Answer, (as himself reported in *Apud August. de Civ. dii lib. 19. c. 23. col. 1181. de præpar. Evang. lib. 4. de Cuvand. Græc. Af. sect.* his Book, *περὶ τῆς ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας*, not *στολογία φιλοσοφίας*, as 'tis corruptly in *S. Augustine*, a Book frequently cited both by *Eusebius* and *Theodoret*; where by the way in the *Latin* Version of *Theodoret*, 'tis by a strange mistake rendered *de Electorum Philosophia*, as if it had been *ἐκλογῶν*: in this book concerning the *Philosophy* drawn from *Oracles*, he tells us he received this answer) *That he might as well, and to better purpose attempt to write upon the surface of the Water, or to fly like a bird in the Air, than to reduce his Wife from those wicked Sentiments she had taken in.* And this was so common and notorious, that it became in a manner *Proverbial*; whence that of *Galen*, when he would express how pertinaciously the Philosophers adhered to those Sentiments they had once drunk in, and how very hard, and almost impossible it was to convince them, *Sooner*, says he, *may a man undeceive a Jew or a Christian, and make them renounce the Doctrines of Moses or of Christ, than Philosophers and Physicians that*

Θαττον
γὰρ ἀντίς
τὸς ἀπὸ
Μαυσὲ καὶ
Χριστὸ με-
ταδιδαξ-
εῖν ἢ τὸς
ταῖς αἰρέ-
σεσι προ-
ετηκότας
ιατροὺς τὰ
καὶ φιλο-
σόφους *Galen. περὶ διαρ. σφυγμῶν, lib. 3. fol. 18. p. 2. Tom. 3.*

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Part 2. are once addicted to their several
Sects.

C H A P. VII.

Of their Exemplary Patience
under Sufferings.

*Christianity likely to engage its followers
in suffering, and why. Continual Edicts
put forth against Christians. The
form of those Imperial Orders exempli-
fied out of the Acts of the Martyrs.
The fierce Opposition of the Roman
Emperors, and their probable hopes
of having destroyed Christianity evi-
denced from several Inscriptions to
that purpose found in Spain. The
greatness of the Torments Christians
endured; some of the ordinary kinds
of them describ'd. The Cross; the
pain and Ignominy of it; persons cru-
cified with their Heads downwards.
The Rack, what. Catasta: ad Pul-
pitum post Catastam. Ungulæ:
one of these kept and ador'd as a Re-
lique at Rome. The Wheel. Burn-
ing. Throwing to wild beasts. Being
condemned*

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condemned to Mines ; their treat-Part 2.
ment there, and the case of such per-
sons. Some of the extraordinary ways
of punishment used towards Christi-
ans. Torn asunder by branches of
trees : burnt in pitch'd coats : boyl'd
in pots of oyl or lead, &c. Their car-
riage under their sufferings sedate and
calm ; meek and patient. Their re-
fusing to make use of opportunities to
avoid suffering. Whether they might
fly and withdraw in times of Per-
secution : Allow'd and Practis'd in
some cases ; two instanc'd in. Where
persons were of more than ordinary
use and eminency. Where they were
weak for the present, and not like to
hold out. Prov'd by particular in-
stances. Their chearful offering them-
selves to the rage and fury of their ene-
mies, confessed by the relation of their
Judges and bitterest Adversaries, Ti-
berianus, Arrius Antonius, Lucian.
The earnest desire of Martyrdom in
Ignatius, Laurentius, Origen, and o-
thers. When unjustly condemned,
their Judges thanked for condemning
them. Their glorying in suffering and
being crucified. Babylas the Martyr's
chains buried with him. No signs of

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Part 2. *an impatient mind under their bitterest Torments. An account of their chearful Suffering out of Cyprian. Their Patience wondred at by their Enemies. Their grand support under suffering; the hopes and assurance of a Reward in Heaven. The case of the Forty Martyrs in St. Basil. Psalms sung at the Funeral of Christians, and Lights carried before the Corps, and why. Christianity vastly encreased by the patience and constancy of Christians, Justin Martyr's account of his conversion by this means. Julian generally refused to put Christians to Death, and why. The Testimonies of several Heathens concerning the Christians courage and patience under sufferings.*

THat the Christian Religion at its first appearing in the World was likely to engage its followers in Miseries and Sufferings, could not be unknown to any that considered the nature of its Doctrine, and the tendency of its Design. The severity of its Precepts so directly opposite to the corrupt and vicious Inclinations of Men; the purity of its Worship so flatly contrary

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trary to the *loose* and obscene rites and Part 2.
solemnities of the Heathens; its absolute Inconsistency with those Religions which had obtained for so many Ages, which then had such firm *possession* of the minds of Men, and all the *Powers* and *Policies* of the world to secure and back them, could not prophesie to it any kind of wellcome Entertainment. *This Sect* (for so they call'd it) *was every where* not only *spoken*, but *fought against*: For since men have a natural veneration for *Antiquity*, and especially in matters of Religion, they thought themselves concerned to defend that way, that had been conveyed to them from their *Ancestors*, and to set themselves with might and main against whatever might oppose it: especially the *great ones* of those times, and the *Roman Emperors* made it their master-design to oppress and stifle this Infant Religion, and to banish it out of the World. Hence those Imperial *Orders* that were daily sent abroad into all parts of the Empire, to command and empower their Governors to ruine and destroy the *Christians*; of which that we may the better apprehend the *form* of them, it may not be amiss to set
down

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Part 2. down one or two of them out of the
acts of the Martyrs. This following
 was agreed upon both by the Em-
 perors, and the whole Senate of Rome.
 Decius and Valerian Emperours, Tri-
 umphers, Conquerors, August, Pious, to-
 gether with the whole Senate, have by
 common consent decreed thus: Whereas
 we have received the gifts and blessings
 of the Gods, by whom we enjoy Victory
 over our Enemies, as also temperate sea-
 sons, and Fruits in great Plenty and a-
 bundance; since we have found them
 our great Benefactors; and to supply us
 with those things that are universally be-
 neficial to all; We therefore unanimou-
 sly decree, that all orders of Men, as well
 children as servants, Soldiers as private
 persons, shall offer Sacrifices to the Gods,
 doing reverence and supplication to them.
 And if any shall dare to violate our di-
 vine Order thus unanimously agreed upon,
 we command, that he be cast into Prison,
 and afterwards exposed to several kinds
 of Torments: If by this means he be re-
 claimed, he may expect no mean Honors
 from us. But if he shall persist contu-
 macious, after many Tortures, let him be
 beheaded, or thrown into the Sea, or cast
 out to be devoured by dogs and birds of
 Prey.

Metra
phrast. in
Martyr.
S. Mercur.
apud. Sur.
ad 24 No.
vemb.
Tom. 6.

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Prey. But especially if there be any found Part 2.
of the Religion of the Christians. As for
those that obey our Decrees, they shall re-
ceive great Honours and Rewards from
us. So happily fare ye well.

To this we may add that short Re-
script of Valerian. Valerian the Empe-
rour, to the Ministers and Governors of
Provinces. We understand that the Pre-
cepts of the Laws are violated by those
who in these days call themselves Christi-
ans. Wherefore we will, that apprehend-
ing them, unless they sacrifice to our Gods,
you expose them to divers kinds of Punish-
ments; that so both Justice may have place
without delay, and Vengeance in cutting
off Impieties, having attained its end,
may proceed no further. This course they
prosecuted with so much Vigour and
Fierceness, that some of them boasted,
that they had absolutely effected their
Design. Witness those *Trophies*, and
Triumphal Arches, that were every
where erected to perpetuate the me-
mory of their Conquest over Christia-
nity; whereof these two *Inscriptions*
found at *Clunia* in *Spain* are a sufficient
evidence.

*Act. Sym-
phor. apud
Syr. ad 22.
Aug. 10. 4.*

DIOCLE-

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Part 2.

Gruter. In-
script. p.
280. Num.
3-

DIOCLETIANUS. JOVIUS. ET.
MAXIMIAN. HERCULEUS.
CAES. AUGG.
AMPLIFICATO. PER. ORIEN
TEM. ET. OCCIDENTEM.
IMP. ROM.
E T.
NOMINE. CHRISTIANORUM.
DELETO. QUI. REMP. EVER
TEBANT.

The other,

Id. num. 4.

DIOCLETIAN. CAES.
AUG. GALERIO. IN. ORI
ENTE. ADOPT. SUPER
STITIONE. CHRIST--
UBIQ DELETA. ET. CUL
TU. DEOR. PROPAGATO.

The meaning of both which is to shew, that *Dioclesian* and his Colleague *Maximianus* had every where extinguished the wicked *Superstition* of *Christ*, so pernicious to the Commonwealth, and had restor'd *Paganism* and the worship of the *Gods*. But long before them we find *Nero* (the *first* Emperor that raised persecution against the *Christians*, as *Tertullian* notes) so active

7.
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active in the business, as to glory (or Part 2. some Flatterers in his behalf) that he had done the work. Witness an *Inscription* found also in *Spain*.

NERONI. CL. CAIS.
AUG. PONT. MAX.

Ibid. Pag.
238.
num. 9.

OB. PROVINC. LATRONIB.
ET. HIS. QUI. NOVAM.
GENERI HUM. SUPER
STITION. INCULCAB.

PURGATAM.

.....
.....

This *Inscription* was set up in memory of his having purged the Country of Robbers, and such as had introduc'd and obtruded a new superstition upon Mankind. The Christians it's true are not particularly nam'd in it (probably the Gentiles so much detested the very name of *Christian*, that especially in publick Monuments they would not mention it) yet can it be meant of no other. For besides that this Character of *Inculcating* their Superstition admirably agrees to *Christians*, who sought
by

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Part 2. by all means to *instill* their Principles into the minds of men ; besides that *Superstition* was the common *Title* by which the Gentiles were wont to denote Christianity ; besides this, there was not (as *Baronius* observes) any other *new* Religion at that time, or long before or after, that appeared in the world ; to be sure none that could be the object of *Nero's* Persecution. And how he entertain'd this, *Tertullian* sufficiently intimates, bidding them search their own *Records*, and they would find. And from this very *Inscription* alone its evident, they thought, that (at least in that part of the world) they had wholly extirpated and rooted it out. By all which we may guess, what hot service the *Christians* had on't under those Primitive Persecutions. Indeed their Sufferings were beyond all imagination great, which yet did but so much the more exercise and advance their *Patience* the bitterness of their Sufferings, making their patience more eminent and illustrious. Of which that we may take the truer Measures, 'twill be necessary to consider these two things, the *greatness* of those *Torments* and Sufferings which the *Christians* generally

*Ad Ann.
Chr. 69.*

*Apol. c. 3.
p. 6.*

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nerally underwent; and then the *man-* Part 2.
ner of their carriage under them.

For the first, the greatness of those *torments* and sufferings which they underwent, they were as bad as the Wit and Malice of either *Men* or *Devils* could invent; in the Consideration whereof we shall first take a view of those Punishments which were more standing and *ordinary*, familiarly used amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and then of such as were *extraordinarily* made use of towards the Christians: Amongst their ordinary Methods of Execution, these six were most eminent, the *Cross*, the *Rack*, the *Wheel*, *Burning*, *Wild Beasts*, *condemning to Mines*.

I. The *Cross*, deserves the first place in our account, not only as having been one of the most *ancient* and *universal* ways of punishment amongst the *Gentiles*, and from them brought in amongst the *Jews*, but as being the Instrument by which our Blessed *Saviour* himself was put to death. Omitting the various and different forms and kinds of it, which were all used towards the Primitive Christians, I intend here only that that was most common, a straight
piece

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Part 2. piece of wood fixed in the ground, having a transverse Beam fastened near the Top of it, not unlike the Letter T, though probably it had also a piece of wood arising above the top of it. And there were *two things* in this way of Punishment, which render'd it very severe, the *Pain* and *Ignominy* of it. Painful it must needs be, because the party suffering was fastned to it with *Nails* driven through his *Hands* and *Feet*, which being the parts where the *Nerves* and *Sinews* terminate and meet together, must needs be most acutely sensible of Wounds and Violence: And because they were pierced only in these parts so far distant from the *Vitals*, this made their Death very *lingring* and tedious, doubled and trebled every pain upon them: Insomuch that some out of a generous Compassion have caused Malefactors first to be *strangled* before they were *crucified*; as *Julius Cæsar* did towards the *Pirates*, whom he had sworn to execute upon the Cross. But no such Favor was shewed to Christians; they were suffered to remain in the midst of all those exquisite Pangs, till meer Hunger starved them, or the mercy of wild Beasts,

*Sueton. in
vit. Cæsar.
c. 74. p. 76.*

*Vid. Euseb.
H. Eccl.
lib. 8. c. 8.
p. 300.*

or

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or birds of prey dispatch'd them. Thus Part 2.
 S. Andrew the Apostle continued *two* Martyrol. Rom. ad diem 30. Nov. p. 736. lb. ad diem 3 Maii p. 272.
whole days upon the Cross, teaching the people all the while. *Timotheus* and his Wife *Manra*, after many other torments, hung upon the Cross *nine days* together before they compleated their Martyrdom. Nor was the *shame* of this way of suffering less than the pain of it, Crucifixion being the *peculiar* punishment of *Slaves, Traytors*, and the vilest *Malefactor*, Vul. Gallic. in Avid. Cass. c. 4. p. 248. Vid. Laet. de ver. sap. c. 26. p. 436. insomuch that for a *Free-man* to die thus was accounted the highest Accent of Ignominy and Reproach: therefore the *Roman Historian* calls it *servile supplicium*, a punishment proper to slaves. Sometimes they were Crucified with their Heads *downwards*: Thus S. Peter is said to have been crucified: thus those *Egyptian* Martyrs, who hung in this posture till they were starved out of the world. But this punishment of the Cross soon after the World was become Christian, *Constantine* took away out of reverence Eus. l. 3. c. 1. & l. 8. ubi supra. Sozom. l. 1. c. 8. p. 412. to our *Saviour*, not being willing that that should be the *punishment* of the vilest Malefactors which had been the *Instrument* whereupon the Son of God had purchased *Salvation* for Mankind.

Part 2. II. The Rack, called in Latine *Equuleus*, either from the Situation of the Offender's Body upon the Engine resembling a man on *horseback*, or rather from the *horsing* or holding of him up to it by Ropes and Screws. The first design of it was to torment the guilty, or the suspected person to make him *confess* the Truth: what the particular form of it was, is not agreed amongst learned Men, but this we may probably conceive, that it was an Engine fram'd off several pieces of Timber joyn'd together, upon the top whereof upon a long *board* the suffering person being laid along upon his back, and fastned to it by his Hands and Feet, the Engine was so contriv'd with Screws and Pullies, that all his Members were *disended* with the utmost violence even to a *luxation* of all the Parts; and this more or less according to the Tormentors pleasures. Sometimes they were hung by the Hands and Feet under the top-board of the Engine, and tormented in that posture. This Rack was a punishment which the *Christians* were very frequently put to. Much of the same nature was that which they call'd the *Catasta*, being a piece of Wood raised up like a little Scaffold, upon which *Christians*

Cic. pro
Deiotar. p.
579. tom. 2.
Vid. Gallon.
de cruciat.
martyr. c. 3.

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stians were set, that their torments might Part 2.
be more conspicuous; thence that Pro-
verb in Cyprian, *Ad Pulpitum post Cata-* Ep. 33.
stam venire, speaking of *Aurelius* a Con- P. 47.
fessor, who having been publicly tor-
mented upon this Engine, was after or-
dain'd a *Reader* in the Church, and pro-
moted to read the Scriptures out of the
Pulpit, as he had lately confessed Christ
upon the Scaffold. In this, as in that of
the Rack, there were certain Additional
Torments made by Instruments, called
Ungulae, which were a kind of Iron *Pin-*
fers, made with sharp Teeth, with which
the Flesh was by piece-meal pull'd and
torn off their Backs.

In the time of Pope *Paul* the Third,
one of these *Ungulae*, as
the Author of the *Roma*
Subterranea tells us, was a-
mongst other things found
in the *Vatican Cemetery*
amongst the Monuments
of the *Martyrs*, and laid
up amongst the other *Re-*
liques of that Church as an
inestimable *treasure*, and a worthy Ob-
ject of *Religious* Worship; being there
kept to be seen and ador'd by all Chri-
stian People. And another of their wri-

*Haec ungula in sacrum
Sanctuario reliquiarum ejus-
dem Basilicae, religioso cultu,
tanquam res omni pretiosior
auro, dignissime asservatur;
& Christianorum populo vi-
denda ac veneranda proponi-
tur. Rom. Subter. l. 2.
c. 4. num. 16. p. 149.
Gall'on. ib. c. 5. p. 189.*

Part 2. ters being about to describe it, tells us, that though altogether *unworthy* of such a *favour*, yet he was blessed with the sight of it, and that (as became him) he *kissed* and embraced it with great *veneration*. Which by the way seems to me a little strange, that it should be accounted an *honor* and a kindness done to the *Martyrs*, to adore that which was the *instrument* of their Torment. Might they not by the same reason as well worship their *Executioners*, and pay a religious respect to the Ashes of those who dragg'd them to the Stake, tore off their Flesh, and put them to Death with all imaginable Pain and Torture?

III. The ~~Wheel~~ Wheel. This was a *round* Engine, to which the Body of the condemned person being bound, was not only extreamly distended, but *whirl'd* about with the most violent distortion; the Pain whereof was unconceivable, especially as used towards the Primitive Christians: The Wheel to which they were bound naked, being sometimes full of *Iron Pricks*, sometimes a Board full of sharp pointed Iron Pricks being plac'd under it; so that every time the Body of the Martyr came to it, they rak'd off the Flesh with inexpressible

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pressible Torment. Thus were serv'd Part 2.
those three Martyrs, *Felix* the Presbyter, *Fortunatus* and *Achilleus* the Deacons at *Valentia* in *France*, and hundreds
Mat. Rom. ad diem April. 23. p. 249.
more in other places.

IV. Burning. This was done sometimes by staking them down to a Pile of Wood, and setting it on fire. Thus suffered *Julianus* and others in the Persecution at *Alexandria*. Sometimes by laying them to roast at a slow gentle Fire, that they might die with the greater Torment. Otherwiles they were hung up either by the Neck, Hands or Feet, and a Fire made under them, either to burn or choak them. Or burning Torches held to several parts of their naked Bodies. Sometimes they were placed in an iron chair, or laid upon an iron grate, which was either made red hot, or had a fire continually burning under it. Of all which ways of Execution, and some other near akin to them, were it not too tedious I could easily give abundant Instances. This was accounted one
L. 28. Pref. & sect. 11. ff. de penis.
of the prime ways of capital punishments, and none were adjudged to it but the greatest Villains, the meanest and vilest persons.

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Part 2. V. Throwing to Wild Beasts.

*Leg. 3. sect.
5 ff. l. 48.
tit. 8. ad
leg. Corn.
de Sicar.
C. 103.*

*Ter. Ap.
C. 40.*

This was a Punishment very common amongst the *Romans* to condemn a man to fight for his Life with the most savage Beasts, *Bears, Leopards, Lions, &c.* and was usually the portion of the vilest and most despicable Offenders; under which Notion the *Gentiles* looking upon the *Christians*, did most commonly condemn them to this kind of death; a thing so familiar, that it became in a manner proverbial; *Christianos ad Leones*, Away with the *Christians* to the *Lions*. And that they might be devour'd with the more ease, they were many times tied down to a stake; sometimes cloath'd in *beasts skins*, the more eagerly to provoke the Rage and Fury of the Wild Beasts against them.

*Ep. 77.
p. 155.*

VI. Condemning to the Mines. To this the *Romans* adjudg'd their *Slaves*, and the most infamous Malefactors; and to this too the *Christians* were often sent. What their treatment was in those places, besides their continual Toyl and Drudgery, *Cyprian* lets us know in a Letter to *Nemesian*, and the rest that labour'd in the *Mines*, viz. that they were cruelly beaten with Clubs, bound with Chains, forc'd to lie upon the hard, cold,

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cold, damp ground, conficted with *bunger*, *nakedness*, the *Deformity* of their Heads half *shaved*, after the manner of Slaves, and forc'd to live in the midst of Filth and Nastiness. Besides which they were wont to be *mark'd* and branded in the Face, to have their *right eye* pull'd out, and their *left foot* disabled by cutting the *Nerves* and Sinews of it: not to say, that being once under this Condemnation, all their *estate* was forfeit to the Publick Treasury, and themselves for ever reduc'd into the Condition of *Slaves*. These were some of the more usual ways of Punishment amongst the *Romans*, though exercis'd towards the Christians in their utmost Rigor and Severity. I omit to speak of Christians being *scourg'd* and whip'd even to the tiring of their Executioners, especially with Rods called *Plumbatae*, (whereof there is frequent mention in the *Theodosian Code*) which were Scourges made of cords or thongs, with *leaden* Bullets at the end of them: Of their being ston'd to death, their being beheaded, their being thrust into stinking and nasty Prisons, where they were set in a kind of Stocks with five holes, their Legs being stretch'd asunder

*Vid. Leg. 8.
sess. 4. ff.
qui test.
fac. possunt.*

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Part 2. to reach from one end to the other,

We shall now consider some few of those *unusual* torments and punishments which were inflicted only upon Christians, or (if upon any others) only in extraordinary Cases. Such was their being *tied* to Arms of Trees, bent by great force and strength by certain Engines, and being suddenly let go, did in a moment tear the Martyr in pieces, in which way many were put ~~to~~ death in the Persecution at *Thebais*. Sometimes they were clad with *Coats* of Paper, Linnen, or such like, dawb'd in the inside with Pitch and Brimstone, which being set on fire, they were burnt alive. Otherwhiles they were shut into the belly of a *brazen* Bull, and a Fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a Torment beyond imagination. Sometimes they were put into a great Pot or *caldron* full of *boyling* Pitch, Oyl, Lead, or Wax mixed together; or had these fatal Liquors by holes made on purpose poured into their *bowels*. Some of them were hung up by one or both Hands, with Stones of great weight tied to their Feet to augment their Sufferings. Others were *anointed* all over their Bodies with Honey; and at mid-day fast-
ned

Eus. Hist.

Ecc. l. 8.

c. 9. p. 300.

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ned to the top of a Pole, that they Part 2.
might be a Prey to Flies, Wasps, and
such little Cartel, as might by degrees
sting and torment them to death. Thus
besides many others, it was with *Mar-*
cus Bishop of *Arethusa*, a venerable old Naz. Or. 1.
in Jul.
p. 89.
man, who suffered under *Julian* the A-
postate; after infinite other Tortures
they dawb'd him over with Honey and
Jellies, and in a Basket fastned to the
top of a Pole, expos'd him to the *hot-*
test Beams of the Sun, and to the Fury
of such little *Insects* as would be sure
to prey upon him. Sometimes they
were put into a *rotten Ship*, which be-
ing turn'd out to Sea was set on Fire.
Thus they serv'd an Orthodox *Presbyter* Id. Or. 20:
p. 416. l. 4.
c. 16.
under *Valens* the *Arian* Emperour;
the same which *Socrates* reports of p. 227.
fourscore pious and devout Men, who
by the same Emperor's Command, were
thrust into a Ship, which being brought
into open Sea, was presently fir'd, that
so by this means they might also want
the honor of a Burial. And indeed
the Rage and Cruelty of the Gentiles
did not only reach the Christians while
alive, but extend to them after *Death*,
denying them (what has been other-
wise granted amongst the most *barba-*
rons

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Part 2. *rous* people) the conveniency of Burial, exposing them to the ravage and fierceness of *Dogs* and *Beasts of Prey*, a thing which we are told the *Primitive Christians* reckon'd as not the least Aggravation of their Sufferings. Nay, where they had been quietly buried, they were not suffered many times (as *Tertullian* complains) to enjoy the *asylum* of the Grave, but were plucked out, rent and torn in pieces.

Euf. Hist.
Eccel. l. 4.
c. 1. 165.
& de Mar-
tyr. Pal.
c. 9. p. 334.

Ap. 37.
p. 30.

Lib. 8. c.
12. p. 307.

Cypr. ad
Demetr.
p. 200.

But to what purpose is it any longer to insist upon these things? Sooner may a man tell the Stars, than reckon up all those methods of Misery and Suffering which the Christians endured. *Eusebius*, who himself was a sad Spectator of some of the later Persecutions, professes to give over the Account, as a thing beyond all possibility of Expression; the manner of their Sufferings, and the Persons that suffered, being hard, nay, impossible to be reckoned up. The truth is, (as he there observes, and *Cyprian* plainly tells *Demetrian* of it) their Enemies did little else but set their Wits upon the Tentors to find out the most *exquisite* Methods of Torture and Punishment; they were not content with those old ways of Torment which

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which their Forefathers had brought Part 2.
in, but by an ingenious Cruelty daily
invented new, striving to excell one
another in this piece of hellish Art, and
accounting those the wittiest persons
that could invent the bitterest and
most barbarous Engines of Execution;
and in this they improved so much,
that *Ulpian*, Master of Records to *Alexander Severus* the Emperor, and the
great Oracle of those Times for Law,
writing several Books *De Officio Procon-*
sulis (many parcels whereof are yet
extant in the Body of the *Civil Law*)
in the seventh Book collected toge-
ther the several bloody *Edicts* which
the Emperors had put out against the
Christians, that he might shew by what
ways and methods they ought to be
punished and destroyed, as *Lactantius* De iustit.
tells us. But this Book (as to what L. 3. c. 11.
concerned *Christians*) is not now extant, p. 491.
the Zeal and Piety of the first Chri-
stian Emperors having banished all
Books of that nature out of the world,
as appears by a Law of the Emperour
Theodosius, where he commands the L. 3. C. de
Writings of *Porphyry*, and all others Sum. Trin.
that had written against the *Christian* sect. 1.
Religion to be burned. The reason
why

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Part 2. why we have no more Books of the Heathens concerning the Christians extant at this day.

Having given this brief *Specimen* of some few of those grievous Torments to which the Primitive Christians were exposed (they that would have more, must read the *Martyrologies* of the Church, or such as have purposely written on this Subject) we come next to consider what was their *behaviour* and *carriage* under them. This we shall find to have been most *sedate* and *calm*, most constant and resolute; they neither *fainted* nor *fretted*; neither rail-
ed at their Enemies, nor sunk under their hands, but bore up under the heaviest Torments, under the bitterest Reproaches, with a Meekness and Patience that was invincible, and such as every way became the Mild, and yet Generous Spirit of the Gospel. So *Justin Martyr* tells the *Jew*, We patiently bear (says he) all the Mischiefs which are brought upon us either by Men or Devils, even to the Extremities of Death and Torments, praying for those that thus treat us, that they may find Mercy, not desiring to hurt or revenge our selves upon any that injure us, according

*Dial. cum
Tryph.
p. 236.*

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cording as our great *Lawgiver* has com- Part 2.
 manded us. Thus *Eusebius* reporting *Orat. de*
 the hard Usage which the Christians *laud. Const.*
 met with during the Times of Persecu- c. 7. p. 622.
 tion, tells us, that they were betrayed
 and butchered by their own Friends
 and Brethren; but they as couragious
 Champions of the true Religion, ac-
 customed to prefer an Honourable
Death, in defence of the Truth, before
life it self, little regarded the cruel U-
 sage they met with in it : but rather
 as became true Souldiers of God, *arm-*
ed with Patience, they laughed at all
 methods of Execution, Fire and Sword,
 and the piercing of Nails, Wild Beasts,
 and the bottom of the Sea, cutting and
 burning of Limbs, putting out Eyes, and
 mutilation of the whole body, Hunger,
 and digging in Mines, Chains and Fet-
 ters; all which for the great Love that
 they had to their *Lord* and *Master*, they
 accounted *sweeter* than any Happiness
 or Pleasure whatsoever. Nay, the very
Women in this case were as couragious
 as the *Men*, many of whom undergo-
 ing the same Conflicts, reaped the same
 rewards of their Constancy and Vertue.
 But this will more distinctly appear in
 a few particular cases.

First,

174 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part 2. *First*, When ever they were sought for in order to their being condemned and executed, they cared not to make use of *Opportunities* to escape. *Polycarp* at his Apprehension refused to fly, though going but into the next house might have sav'd his Life. *Cyprian* writing to the Confessors, commends them, that when they were oft desired (I suppose he means by their *Gentile* Friends and Relation) to go out of Prison, they chose rather to abide there still, than to make their own Escape; telling them, they had made as many Confessions, as they had had Opportunities to be gone, and had rejected them. Though ('tis true) he himself withdrew from *Carthage*, when the Officers were sent to take him and carry him to *Utica*, yet he did it (as he tells his People) by the advice of some Friends; but for this reason, that when he did suffer he might suffer at *Carthage*, whereof he was Bishop, and that those Truths which he had preached to them in his Life, he might seal before them with his blood; a thing he earnestly and daily begg'd of God, and which was granted to him afterwards. And if they did not run away from suffering,

Ep. ad Mo-
sen &
Max. ep.
15. p. 28.

Ep. 83.
p. 161.

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ing, much less did they oppose it, and Part 2. make Tumults and Parties to defend themselves; no, they were led as *Lambs to the Slaughter, and as Sheep before the Shearers are dumb, so opened not they their mouth, but committed their Cause to him that judges righteously, and who has said, Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it.* None of us (says Cyprian to the Governor) when apprehended makes resistance, nor (though our Party be large and numerous) revenges himself for that unjust Violence that you offer to us. We patiently acquiesce in the assurance of a future Vengeance; the *innocent* truckle under the *unrighteous*; the *guiltless* quietly submit to *pains* and Tortures; knowing for certain, that whatever we now suffer shall not remain unpunished, and that the greater the Injury that is done us in these Persecutions we endure, the more just and heavy will be that Vengeance that will follow it. Never was any wicked Attempt made against Christians, but a Divine *Vengeance* was soon at the heels of it. But though they thus resolutely stood to't, when the Honour of their Religion lay at stake, yet it must not be denied that in some cases they

Ad Demetrian.
p. 202.

176 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 7:

Part 2. they held it lawful and convenient to
Lib. de fug. fly in Times of Persecution. *Tertullian*
in persecut. indeed in a Book purposely written on
 this Subject, maintains it to be simply
 and absolutely unlawful for Christians
 to fly at such a time; an Assertion
 which with all the Subtilties of his
 Wit, and the Flourishes of his *African*
 Eloquence, he endeavors to render
 fair and plausible. But besides the strict-
 ness and rigid Severity of the Man at
 all times, this Book was composed af-
 ter his complying with the Sect of the
Montanists, whose peculiar Humor it
 was to out-do the *Orthodox* by over-
 straining the Austerities of Religion,
 as appears not only in this, but in the
 case of *Marriages, Fasts, Penances*, and
De patient. such like. Otherwise before his espou-
c. 13. p. 147 sing those Opinions, he seems elsewhere
 to speak more favorably of shunning
 Persecution. But whatever he thought
 in the Case, 'tis certain the Generality
 of the Fathers were of another mind,
 that Christians might and ought to use
 prudence in this Affair, and at some
 times withdraw to avoid the storm
 when it was a-coming, especially in
 these two Cases:

I. When persons were of more than
 or-

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ordinary use and eminency, the saving Part 2.
of whom might be of great advantage
to the Church. A Christian that flies Lib. 2.
p. 406.
in this case (as *Origen* tells *Celsus*) does
it not for fear, but in a prudent Com-
pliance with his Lords Direction, and
with a design to keep himself undefiled,
that he may be able to minister to the
Salvation of others. Thus *S. Paul* was
let down the wall in a *Basket*, when the
Governour of *Damascus* sought his life.
Thus *Cyprian* withdrew from *Carthage*,
and lay hid for two years together,
during which time he gave secret or-
ders for governing of the Church.
Thus *Athanasius*, when *Syrianus* and *Athanas. A-
pol. de fug.
sua. Tom. I.
p. 545.*
his Souldiers broke into the Church
to apprehend him, was by the univer-
sal cry both of Clergy and People per-
suaded, and in a manner forced to re-
tire and save himself, in which retire-
ment he continued so long, that the
Arians charg'd him with fear and cow-
ardise, insomuch that for his own vin-
dication he was forced to write an *A-
pology* for himself, wherein he learnedly
and eloquently discourses the whole af-
fair, justifying himself from the instances
of the Old Testament of *Jacob*, *Moses*,
David, *Elias*; from the example of *Christ*
M himself

Part 2. himself and his Apostles in the New, from the plain and positive allowance of the Gospel, *When they persecute you in one City flee into another, and that when they should see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place (i.e. the miseries that were to come upon Jerusalem by the Roman Army) they should fly unto the Mountains, and if upon the house top, or in the field, not turn back to fetch any thing that was left behind; that 'twas necessary for the Apostles to shun the storm, because they were the instruments immediately deputed to propagate and convey the Gospel to the World; that they were herein initiated by the Primitive Saints and Martyrs, who wandered about in deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth, being equally careful to avoid the two extreams of rashness and cowardise, they would neither thrust themselves upon danger, nor basely run from death when call'd to it, like wise Physicians, reserving themselves for the use of those that needed their assistance. All which, and a great deal more he rationally urges in that Apology.*

II. Another case wherein they accounted it lawful for persons to retire under persecutions was, when being but

new

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new Converts, and as yet *weak* in the Part 2. faith, they look'd upon them as not likely to bear the shock and brunt of the persecution; in this case they thought it better for them to *withdraw* for the present, than to put them under a temptation of being drawn back to Paganism and Idolatry. Thus when Gregory Bishop of *Neocæsarea* saw the *Decian* Persecution grow extream hot and violent, considering the frailty and infirmity of humane nature, and how few would be able to bear up under those fierce conflicts that must be undergone for the sake of Religion, perswaded his Church a little to decline that dreadful and terrible storm, telling them 'twas a great deal better to *save* their Souls by flying, than by abiding those furious trials to run the hazard of *falling* from the faith: and that his Counsel might make the deeper impression upon them, and he might convince them that in thus doing there was no danger or prejudice to their Souls; he resolv'd to shew them the way by his own *example*, and himself first retiring out of the reach of danger, retreated to the mountainous parts thereabouts that were freest from the rage and malice of the Enemy.

Nyssen. O-
rat. de vit.
Greg. Thaum-
mat.
p. 1001.
tom. 2.

180 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part 2. Nor was this any *impeachment* of their zeal and readiness for suffering, but only a prudent gaining a little respite for a time, that they might suffer with greater advantage afterwards. They did not desire to save their heads, when the honor of their Religion call'd for it, nor ever by indirect means, screw'd themselves out of danger when once engaged in it, though they did sometimes prudently prevent it, reserving themselves for a more convenient season. Thus *Cyprian* withdrew a little, not out of fear of suffering, but a desire to prevent his being put to death in an *obscure* place (which his enemies had designed) being desirous his Martyrdom should happen in that place where he so long liv'd, and so publicly preach'd the christian faith.

Secondly, They were so far from declining Suffering, and being terrified with those Miseries which they saw others undergo, that they freely and in great Multitudes *offered* themselves to the rage and fury of their Enemies; embracing death as the greatest *Honor* that could be done them; they strove (as *Sulpitius Severus* observes, speaking of the ninth Persecution) which should rush first upon those glorious
con-

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conflicts; men in those days (as he Part 2.
adds) much more greedily seeking
Martyrdom in the cause of *Christ*, than
in after-times they did for *Bishopricks*
and the preferments of the Church.
Lucian, who certainly had very little
Love to Christians, yet gives this ac-
count of them ; The miserable wretch-
es (says he, οἱ κακοδαίμονες) do verily per-
swade them i. e. those of their own
Party, that they shall surely be *immor- Tom. 2.*
tal and live for ever ; upon which ac- p. 763.
count they *despise* death, and many of
them voluntarily offer themselves to
it. Indeed they did ambitiously con-
tend who should be first crown'd with
Martyrdom, and that in such Multi-
tudes, that their Enemies knew not
what to do with them, their very per-
secutors grew weary of their bloody
Offices. *Tiberianus* the President of
Palestine, in his Relation to the Empe-
ror *Trajan* (recorded by *Joannes Mate-
la*, mentioned also by *Suidas*) gives
this account of his proceedings against
them ; I am quite tir'd out in punish-
ing and destroying the Galileans (call'd
here by the name of Christians) ac-
cording to your Commands ; and yet
they cease not to offer themselves to be

*De mort.
Peregr.
Tom. 2.
p. 763.*

*Apud Ms-
ser. Appen.
Ignat. p. 9.
ex Jo. Ma-
tel. Chron.
lib. 11. vid.
Annot. in
Ep. ad
Philad.
not. 82.
in 206.
Τρεῖς αὐτοῖς.*

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Part 2. *slain: Nay, though I have labor'd both by fair means and threatnings to make them conceal themselves from being known to be Christians, yet can I not stave them off from Persecution. So little regard had they to sufferings; nay so impatient were they till they were in the midst of flames. This made Arrius Antoninus the Proconsul of Asia, when at first he severely persecuted the Christians, whereupon all the Christians in that City like an Army, voluntarily presented themselves before his Tribunal, to be surprized with wonder, and causing only some few of them to be executed, he cried out to the rest, O unhappy People, if you have a mind to die, have you not Halters and Precipices enough to end your Lives with, but you must come either for an execution? So fast did they flock to the place of torment, faster than droves of Beasts that are driven to the Shambles. They even long'd to be in the Arms of Suffering. Ignatius, though then in his Journey to Rome in order to his Execution, yet by the way as he went, could not but vent his passionate desire of it: O that I might come to those wild Beasts, that are prepared for me; I heartily wish, that I may presently meet with them;*

*Tertul. ad
Scap. c. 4.
p. 71.*

*Euseb. H.
E. lib. c. 3.
36. p. 107.*

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I would invite and encourage them Part 2.

speedily to devour me, and not be afraid to set upon me as they have been to others; nay, should they refuse it, I would even *force* them to it: I am concern'd for nothing either *seen* or *unseen*, more than to enjoy *Jesus Christ*: Let *fire* and the *cross*, and the *Rage* of *wild Beasts*, the breaking of *Bones*, *distortion* of *Members*, *bruising* of the whole *Body*; yea, all the punishments which the *Devil* can invent, come upon me, so as I may but enjoy *Christ*.

They even envied the Martyrdom of others, and mourned that any went before, while they were left behind.

When *Laurentius* the Deacon espied *Sixtus* the Bishop of *Rome* going to his Martyrdom, he burst into Tears, and passionately call'd out, Whither O my *Father* art thou going without thy *Son*?

Ambr. offic.

lib. 1. c. 42.

Tom. 1.

p. 26.

Whither so fast, O holy Bishop, without thy *Deacon*? Never didst thou use to offer *Spiritual sacrifice* without thy *Minister* to attend thee: What have I done that might displease thee? Hast thou found me *degenerous* and fearful? Make trial at least, whether thou hast chosen a fit Minister to wait upon thee. To this, and more to the same import,

M 4

the

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Part 2. the good Bishop replied, Mistake not *my Son*, I do not leave thee, nor *forsake* thee; greater Trials belong to *thee*; I like a weak old man receive only the first Skirmishes of the Battel; but thou being youthful and valiant, hast a more glorious Triumph over the Enemy *reserv'd* for thee; Cease to weep, thy turn will be presently; for within *three days* thou shalt follow me. So pious a Contention was there between these good men, which of them should first suffer for the name of Christ. 'Tis memorable what we find concerning *Origen*, though then but a *Youth*, that when a great Persecution was raised at *Alexandria*, wherein many suffered, he was so eagerly enflamed with a desire of Martyrdom (especially after his Father had been seized upon and cast into Prison) that he expos'd himself to all Dangers, and courted Torments to come upon him; and had certainly suffered, if his Mother, after all other Intreaties and Persuasions to no purpose had not stoln away his *Clothes* by Night, and for mere Shame forced him to stay at home.

*Euseb. H.
Ecc. lib. 6.
c. 2. p. 202.*

To these I shall add but one Example of the weaker Sex. When *Valens*,
the

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the *Arian* Emperor (who persecuted Part 2.
the *Orthodox* with as much Fury and *Sozom. H.*
Bitterness as any of the Heathen Em- *Eccel. lib. 6.*
perors) came to *Edeffa*, and found *c. 18.*
there great numbers of them daily *p. 660.*
meeting in their publick Assemblies, he
severely check'd the Governor, and
commanded him by all means to root
and ruine them. The Governour,
Though of another Persuasion, yet out
of common Compassion, gave them *private*
Notice of the Emperor's Com-
mands, hoping they would forbear.
But they not at all terrified with the
news, met the next morning in greater
Numbers, which the Governor under-
standing, went to the place of their
Assembly; as he was going, a Woman
in a careless Dress, leading a little Child
in her Hand, rush'd through the Go-
vernor's *Guard*, who commanding her
to be brought before him, asked her
why she made so much *haste*? That I may
the *sooner* come (*said she*) to the place
where the People of the *Catholick*
Church are met together. Knowest thou
not (*said he*) that the Governor will
be there to day, and *kill* all whom
he finds there? I know it well (*answer-*
ed the Woman) and therefore make so
much

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Part 2. much haste, lest I come *too late*, and be depriv'd of the *Crown* of Martyrdom. And being asked, why she carried her *little Son* along with her, she answered, That he also may *partake* of the common Sufferings, and share in the same Rewards. The *Governour* admiring the Courage of the Woman, turn'd back to the *Palace*, and dissuaded the Emperor from his cruel Resolution, as what was neither *honourable* in it self, nor would *conduce* to his Purposes and Designs.

Thirdly, When they were condemn'd, though it was by a most unjust sentence, and to a most horrid death, they were so far from raging or repining, that instead of bitter and tart Reflections, they *gave thanks* to their Enemies for condemning them. A Christian being condemn'd (says *Tertullian*) thanks his Judges, he takes it for a favor to die for so good a cause. That they persecute us (says *Clemens of Alexandria*) it is not because they find us to be *wicked*, but because they think we wrong the world by being Christians, and by teaching and persuading others to be so; as for us, they do us no harm, death does but the sooner send

Apol. c. 46.

p. 35.

Strom. lib.

4. p. 505.

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send us to God ; if therefore we be wise, Part 2.
we shall thank them that are the occasion of our more speedy passage thither. And elsewhere he tells us of *S. Peter*, that seeing his Wife going towards Martyrdom, he exceedingly rejoyced that she was called to so great an *Honor*, and that she was now returning home ; encouraging and exhorting of her, and calling her by her name, bade her to be mindful of our *Lord*. Such (says he) was the Wedlock of that blessed Couple, and their perfect Disposition and Agreement in those things that were dearest to them.

*Lib. 7.
p. 735.*

When *Lucius*, one of the Primitive Martyrs was charg'd by *Urbicius* the Roman prefect for being a Christian, only because he offer'd to speak in behalf of one that had very hard measure, he immediately confess'd it, and being forthwith condemned, he heartily thanked his Judge for it, that by this means he should be deliver'd from such unrighteous Governors, and be sooner sent home to his Heavenly Father. No joyfuller Message could be told them, than that they must die for the sake of Christ: Though we contend with all
your

*Just. Martyr. Apol. I.
p. 43.*

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Part 2. your Rage and Cruelty (as *Tertullian* tells the President *Scapula*) yet we freely offer our selves, and rejoyce more when we are condemned, than when we are absolved and released by you. In despite of all the malice of their Enemies, they accounted the *Instruments* of their Torment, the *Ensigns* of their Honor and their Happiness: When the Heathens reproached them for dying such an infamous Death as that of the *Cross*, and in derision styled them *Sarmenticii* and *Semaxii*, for being burnt upon a little Stake to which they were bound with *Twigs*: *Tertullian* answers for them, *This is the habit of our Victory, this is the embroidered garment of our Conquest, this the triumphant Chariot wherein we ride to Heaven.* When in Prison, they looked upon their *Chains* as their *Ornaments*, as adding a Beauty and Lustre to them, with which they were adorn'd against the time of their Sufferings, as the Bride is with fringes of Gold, and variegated Ornaments against the day of her Espousals. For this reason *Babylas* the Martyr, commanded that the *Chains* which he had worn in Prison, should be buried with him, to shew that those things

Ad Scap.
c. 1. p. 68.

Apol. c. 50.
p. 39.

Enseb. H.
Ecc. lib. 5.
c. 1. p. 160.
c.

Chrysost. l.
de S. Babyl.
tom. 1.
p. 669.

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things which seem most ignominious Part 2.
are for the sake of Christ most splendid
and honourable; imitating therein the
great *Apostle*, who was so far from be-
ing ashamed of, that he took pleasure
in *Bonds, Chains, Reproaches, Persecu-
tions, Distresses for Christ's sake*, profes-
sing to *Glory in nothing but the Cross of
Christ*.

Fourthly, When ever they were ac-
tually under the bitterest Torments,
they never discovered the least sign of
a *furious* or *impatient* mind, but bore
up with a quietness and composure
which no Sufferings could overcome.
Cyprian exhorting the Martyrs to Cou- *Epist. 2.*
rage and Constancy, tells them this of *p. 19.*
those that had gone before them, that
in the hottest conflict they never stir-
red, but maintained their ground with
a *free* Confession, an *unshaken* Mind, a
divine Courage, destitute indeed of *ex-
ternal* Weapons, but armed with the
Shield of Faith; in torments they stood
stronger than their Tormentors; their
bruised and mangled Limbs proved too
hard for the Instrumetns wherewith
their Flesh was rack'd and pull'd from
them; the Blows, though never so oft
repeated, could not conquer their im-
pregnable

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Part 2. pregnable Faith, although they did not only 'slice and tear off the flesh, but rake into their very Bowels; and let out Blood enough to extinguish the Flames of Persecution, and to *allay* the heats of the Everlasting Fire. And in another place, speaking of the Persecution under *Decius* at *Rome*, he tells us, that the Adversary did with an horrible violence break in upon the *Camp of Christ*, but was repulsed with a strength as great as that wherewith he came upon them: that then he craftily attempted the more rude and weak, and subtilly endeavored to set upon them singly, hoping the easilier to circumvent them; but that he found them like a *well-compacted* Army, sober and vigilant, and prepared for Battel; that they could die, but could not be overcome; yea, therefore *unconquerable*, because *not afraid* to die; that they did not resist those that rose up against them, being ready not to kill them that assaulted them; but to lay down their own Lives, and to lose their Blood, that they might make the more haste to get out of a cruel and malicious World. Indeed so admirable was their patience and readiness to die, that their very

enemies

*Ad Cornel.
Epist. 57.
p. 91.*

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enemies stood amaz'd at it. When *Si-* Part 2.
meon, the Second Bishop of *Jerusalem*, *Euseb. l. 3.*
 and of our *Saviour's* kindred, according *c. 32.*
 to the *Flesh*, had by the Command of *p. 104.*
Atticus the Governor of *Syria*, been
 tortur'd with all the arts of Cruelty for
 many days together, he bore it with
 such Courage, that the *Proconsul* him-
 self, and all that were present, greatly
 wondred, that a man of *an hundred*
and twenty years of age, should be able
 to undergo so many Miseries and Tor-
 ments. Of the Martyrs that suffered
 together with *S. Polycarp*, the Church *Id. lib. 4.*
 of *Smyrna* gives this account, That all *c. 15. p. 129*
 that were present were astonish'd
 when they saw them whipp'd till the
 Cords made way to the *inmost* Veins
 and Arteries, till the *Bowels* and the
 most hidden parts of the Body appear-
 ed. They were raked with Shells of
 Fishes, laid all along upon sharp-point-
 ed stakes driven into the ground, exer-
 cised with all sorts of Torments, and at
 last thrown to be devoured of Wild
 Beasts; all which they bore with a
 mighty Patience and Constancy. Nay, *Append. 18.*
 as we find it in the first part of that *nation.*
Epistle (contracted by *Eusebius*, but *Part 2.*
 published at large by Bishop *Usher*) so *p. 14.*
 great

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Part 2. great was their Patience and Magnanimity, that in all these sufferings not any of them gave a *sigh* or a *groan*. The holy Martyrs of Christ (*says the Epistle*) evidently shewing us; that during this sad hour of Suffering they were *Strangers* to their own Bodies, or rather that our *Lord* himself stood by them, and familiarly conversed with them; and that being partaker of his *Grace* they made light of these *Temporal* Torments; and by one short hour delivered themselves from *Eternal* Miseries: The Fire which their Tormentors put to them seemed to them but *cool* and *little*, while they had it in their Thoughts to avoid the everlasting and unextinguishable *flames* of another World; their eyes being fixed upon those Rewards which are prepared for them *that endure to the end*; such as *neither Ear hath heard, nor Eye hath seen, nor hath it entred into the Heart of Man*; but which were shewn to them by our *Lord*, as being now ready to go off from Mortality; and to enter upon the state of *Angels*.

Encom. in
40. Martyr.
append. ad
oper. Greg.
Thaum.
p. 85.

Thus reason'd those forty Martyrs in *St. Basil*, that suffered at *Sebastia* in *Armenia*, in the Reign of *Licinius*, when the Governor, to contrive a new Method

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thod of Torment, had commanded them Part 2:
to stand *naked* all night in cold frosty
weather (which in those more *Northerly*
Countries is extreme sharp and bitter,
it being then the depth of Winter,
and the *North* Wind blowing very
fierce) in a *pond* of Water, they first
gave thanks to God that they put off
their *clothes* and their *sins* together, and
then comforted one another by balancing
their *present* Hardships with their
future Hopes: Is the Weather *sharp*?
(said they) but *Paradise* is *comfortable*
and delightful: Is the *Frost* cold
and bitter? The *rest* that remains, is
sweet and pleasant; let us but hold out
a *little*, and *Abraham's* Bosom will refresh
us; we shall change this *one* night
for an *eternal* Age of Happiness; let our
feet glow with very *cold*, so as they may
forever rejoyce and triumph with Angels;
let our *hands* sink down, so as we may
have liberty to lift them up to God.
How many of our Fellow-souldiers have
lost their Lives to keep Faith to their
Temporal Prince? And should we be
unfaithful to the true *King* of Heaven?
How many have *justly* died for their
Crimes and Villanies? And shall we
refuse it in the cause of *Righteousness*,

N

and

Part 2. and Religion? 'Tis but the *Flesh* that suffers, let us not spare it; since we must die, let us *die* that we may *live*. Thus generously did they bear up under this uncomfortable state; their ardent Desires of Heaven from within extinguishing all Sence of Cold and Hardship from without. Nay, when a little before their Commander had set upon them both with Threatnings and Promises, assuring them, that if they would but *deny Christ*, they should make their own Terms for Riches and Honour: they told him, that he laid his *snare*s at a wrong door; that he could not give them what he endeavored to *take* from them; nor could they close with his Offers, without being infinitely Losers by the Bargain; that 'twas to no purpose to profer a little of the World to them, who despised the whole of it; that all these visible Advantages were nothing to what they had in hope and expectation; all the Beauty and Glory of Heaven and Earth not being comparable to that state of Blessedness, which is the *Portion* of the Righteous; the one being *short-lived* and transitory, the other *permanent* and perpetual; that they were ambitious of

Ex. p. 81.

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of no gift, but the Crown of Righteous- Part 2.
ness, nor sought after any other *glory*
but what was *Heavenly*; that they *fear-*
ed no Torments but those of *Hell*, and
that Fire that was truly terrible; as for
those Punishments they inflicted, they
accounted them but as the *blows* of
Children, and the ill Usage that their
Bodies met with, the longer 'twas endu-
red, the more way it made for a *bright-*
er Crown. Such was the Temper, such
the Support of these Christian-souldiers,
these *true Champions* of the Christian
Faith.

Indeed this Consideration was one of
the greatest Cordials that kept up their
spirits under the saddest sufferings, that
they were assured of a Reward in Hea-
ven. Amongst us (says *Cyprian*) there *Ad Demit.*
flourishes strength of *hope*, firmness of *p. 202.*
Faith, a mind *erect* amongst the Ruines
of a tottering Age, an immoveable *ver-*
tue, a *patience* serene and chearful, and
a Soul always *secure* and certain of its
God. As for Want or Danger, what are
these to Christians, to the Servants of
God, whom *Paradise* invites, and the
favor and plenty of the *Heavenly* King-
dom expects and waits for? They are
always glad, and rejoyce in God, and

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Part 2. resolutely bear the Evils and Miseries of the World, while they look for the Rewards and Prosperities of another Life.

Prepar. E-
vang. l. 1.
c. 4. p. 13:

The great *Philosophers* (as *Eusebius* observes) as much as they talk'd of *Immortality*, yet by their Carriage they shewed, that they look'd upon it but as a trifling and childish *Fable*: whereas (says he) amongst us even *Girles* and *Children*, the most unlearned and (measured by the Eye) the meanest and most despicable persons being assisted by the help and strength of our Blessed *Saviour*, do rather by their *actions* than their *words* demonstrate and make good this Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. This *Julian* confesses of the *Christians*, though according to his custom he gives them bad words, calls them *Atheists* and irreligious Persons, that being acted by some Evil Spirits, they persuade themselves, that Death is by all means to be desired, and that they shall immediately *fly* to Heaven, as soon as their Souls are freed from the *Fetters* of the Body. Hence it was that in those times Christians were wont to sing *Hymns* and *Psalms* at the *Funerals* of the Dead, to signify, that they had attain'd their *rest*, the end of their Labours,

Fragm. ep.
oper. part
1. p. 528.

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 197

bours, the retribution of their Troubles, Part 2. the Reward and the Crown of their Conflicts and Sufferings, as *Chrysostom* tells us; part of which *Psalms* he elsewhere tells us were *Return unto thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*; and, *I will fear no evil, because thou art with me*; and again, *Thou art my refuge from the trouble that compasses me about*. For the same reason, as being a sign of joy and Chearfulness, he there tells us, that they carried *lights* burning before the Corps. By all which he tells us, they signified, that they carried forth *Christians* as *Champions* to the Grave, glorifying God, and giving thanks to him, that he had crowned the deceased person, that he had delivered him from his Labors, that he had taken him to himself, and set him beyond the reach of Storms and Fears.

But to return : There was scarce any one Instance of Religion, wherein Primitive Christianity did more openly approve it self to the World, and more evidently insult over *Paganism*, than the generous Courage and Patience of its Professors. By this they commended both the *Truth* and *Excellency* of their Religion, and conquer'd their

Hom. 51. de

SS. Bern.

& Prold.

Tom. 1.

p. 563.

Hom. 4 ad

Hebr.

p. 173.

Psal. 116.

Psal. 24. 4.

ib. p. 1784.

198 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part 2. very enemies into an embracing of it.
De Justit. Hear how *Lactantius* pleads the Argu-
l. 5. c. 13. ment, and triumphs in the Goodness of
p. 495. his Cause: By reason (says he) of our
 strange and wonderful Courage and
 strength *new additions* are made to us;
 for when the People see men torn in
 pieces with infinite variety of torments,
 and yet maintain a Patience *unconquer-*
able and able to tire out its Tormentors;
 they begin to think (what the Truth
 is) that the *consent* of so many, and the
perseverance of dying persons cannot
 be in vain; nor that *Patience* it self,
 were it not from God, could hold out
 under such Racks and Tortures. *Thieves*,
 and men of a *robust* body, are not able
 to bear such tearing in pieces; they
 groan and cry out, and are overcome
 with pain, because not endued with a
 Divine Patience; but our very *Chil-*
dren, and *Women* (to say nothing of our
Men) do with silence *conquer* their Tor-
 mentors, nor can the hottest Fire force
 the least groan from them. Let the *Ro-*
mans go now and boast of their *Mu-*
tius and *Regulus*, of the one for deli-
 vering himself up to his Enemy, to be
 put to *Death*, because he was ashamed
 to *live* a Prisoner; of the other, for
 burning

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 199

burning his Hand at the Command of Part 2. the Enemy to save his Life. Behold, with us the *weaker* Sex, and the most *tender* Age can suffer all parts of their Body to be torn and burnt, not out of *necessity*, because they might not escape if they would, but out of *choice*, because they believe in God. This is that true *Vertue* which Philosophers indeed vainly *boast* of, but never really *possessed*. This and more to the same purpose that Eloquent *Apologist* there urges to the great Honor of his Religion. By the force of such Arguments *Justin Martyr* confesses, that he was Ap. I. p. 50. brought over from being a *Platonick* Philosopher to be a *Christian*; for when he saw the *Christians*, whom he had so often heard accused and traduced, undauntedly going to *die*, and embracing the most terrible Executions that were prepared for them: *I thought with my self* (says he) *that it was not possible such persons should wallow in vice and Luxury; it being the Interest of all wicked and voluptuous persons to shun Death, to dissemble with Princes and Magistrates, and to do any thing to save their lives.*

This certainly could not but be a
N 4 huge

200 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part 2. huge satisfaction to all prudent and considerate men, that the Christians were guided by *better* Principles than ordinary, and that they were fully assured, that *theirs* was the *true* Religion, and that they taught nothing but what they firmly believed to be true. For to maintain such Patience and Constancy even unto Death, (says *Origen*, speaking of the *Apostles* propagating the Doctrine of *Christ*) is not the *fashion* of those who feign things of their own Heads; but is a manifest Argument to all candid and ingenuous Readers, that they knew what they writ to be true, when they so chearfully endured so many, and such grievous things, only for the sake of the Son of God, in whom they had believed. No Dangers could affright them, no Threatnings or Torments could baffle them out of their Profession. Therefore when *Celsus* accused the *Christians* for a fearful sort of men, and such as lov'd their Carcases well: *Origen* answers, no such matter, *We can as chearfully lay down our Bodies to suffer for Religion, as the hardiest Philosopher of you all can put off his Coat.* And indeed the Gospel did mightily prosper and triumph in the midst of these

Adv. Cels.
l. 2. p. 55.

Lib. 7.
p. 357.

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 201

these dreadful Sufferings; men ratio- Part 2.
nally concluding, that there must be
something more than *humane* in that
Doctrine, for which so many thus deep-
ly ventur'd. So *Tertullian* tells *Scapula*
in the Conclusion of his Book: *It's to* C. I. p. 72.
no purpose to think this Sect will fail,
which you will see to be the more built up,
the faster 'tis pull'd down; for who is
there, that beholding such eminent Pati-
ence, cannot but have some scruples start-
ed in his mind, and be desirous to enquire
into the Cause of it, and when he once
knows the Truth, be himself moved to
close with it and embrace it? There-
fore *Julian the Apostate*, out of a cursed
policy refused many times openly to
put *Christians* to death, partly because
he envied them the honour of being
Martyrs, partly because he saw that
they were like *new mown grass*, the oft-
ner it was cut down, the thicker it
sprang up again.

Naz. in
Jul. In-
vest. 1.
p. 72.

I shall add no more concerning this
Subject, but the *Testimony* which the
very *Enemies* of *Christians* gave them
in this Case. *Julian* the Emperor
(whom we so lately mention'd, and
who fought against *Christians* with
their own weapons, making use of those

Scri-

202 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 7.

Part 2. *Scriptures* which he had studied while he was amongst them) when the Christians complained to him of those Oppressions and Injuries which the Governors of *Provinces* laid upon them, made light of it, and dismissed them with this virulent Sarcasm, *Your Christ* (says he) *has given you a Law, that when you suffer unjustly, you should bear it resolutely, and when oppressed and injured should not answer again.* And so certainly they did, undergoing all kinds of miseries, and Death it self, with so *unconcerned* a mind, that elsewhere he censures them for this very reason, to be acted by the *Spirit* of the Devil. Hence *Porphyry*, in a Book that he wrote against the *Christians*, calls their Religion το βάρβαρον τὸ λυμμεν, a piece of *barbarous boldness*; *barbarous*, because so different from the way of Worship amongst the *Greeks*, with whom every thing was barbarous that agreed not with their Principles and Institutions: *boldness*, because the *Christians* shewed such an undaunted Courage in bearing Miseries and Torments, chusing to die a thousand times rather than to deny *Christ*, and sacrifice to the Gods. For this reason the Heathen in *M. Felix* styles the *Christians*, men of an *undone, furious,*

Nicoph.
Ecc. Hist.
l. 10. c. 24.
to. 2. p. 53.

Frag. epist.
inc. supra
laudat.

Euseb. Hist.
Ecc. l. 6.
c. 19.
p. 220.

M. Felix. p. 7.

Ch. 7. Primitive Christianity. 203

rions and desperate party ; respecting their Part 2. fearless and resolute carriage under sufferings: for so he explains himself presently after; *Is it not a strange folly and an incredible boldness? They despise Torments that are present, and yet fear those that are future and uncertain; and while they fear to die after death, in the mean time they are not afraid to die. So sillily do they flatter themselves and cajole their fears by a deceitful Hope of some unknown Comforts that shall arise to them.* This Arian Lib. 4. c. 7. p. 500. in his collection of *Epicætetus* his Dissertations confesses to be true of those, whom (according to *Julian's* style) he calls the *Galileans*, that they under-went Torments and Death with a mighty Courage, but which he makes to be the effect only of *use*, and a customary bearing sufferings. The Emperor *M. Antoninus* confesses also the matter of Fact, that the *Christians* did thus readily and resolutely die, but ascribes it not to judgment and a rational consideration, but to *meer stubbornness and obstinacy*. And in an *Epistle* that he wrote to the *Common Council of Asia*, in favor of the *Christians*, whom his Officers there did grievously vex and oppress, gives them this Testimony, that they could have no greater kindness done

*τῶν τῆς
ἐαυτῶν
l. 11. sect. 3.
p. 106.*

*Apud Euseb.
Hist. Eccl.
l. 4. c. 13.
p. 126.*

Part 2. done them than to be called in question, and that they had much rather be *put to death* for their Religion, than to have their *Lives* spared to them: By which means they became Conquerors, chusing rather to part with their Lives, than to do what you impose upon them. Let me advise you (says he) who are ready to despond with every *earthquake* that happens to you, to compare your selves with them: they in all their dangers are securely confident in their God; while you at such a time *neglect* the Gods, and have little or no regard, either to other Rites or to the worship of that Immortal Deity, but banish the *Christians* that worship him, and persecute them unto Death. So forcibly did the Majesty of Truth extort a Confession from its greatest Enemies.

The End of the Second Part.

Primitive Christianity;
OR THE
RELIGION
OF THE
Ancient Christians,
In the First Ages of the Gospel.

PART III.

*Of their Religion as respecting other
Men.*

CHAP I.

Of their Justice and Honesty.

*Christian Religion admirably provides
for Moral Righteousness. Do as you
would be done by, the great Law of
Christ:*

206 *Primitive Christianity*. Ch. i.

Part 2. *Christ. This rule highly priz'd by Severus the Emperour. The first Christians accounted honesty and an upright Carriage a main part of their Religion. Their Candour and Simplicity in their words; abhorring Lies and Mental Reservations, though it might save their Lives. Their Veracity such, as no need to be put to their Oaths. Some few of the Fathers against all Swearing: Allowed by the greatest part in weighty Cases. That they took Oaths proved from Athanasius, and their taking the Sacramentum Militare. The form of the Oath out of Vegetius. The same expressly affirmed of the more Ancient Christians by Tertullian. Why refusing to swear by the Emperor's genius. Oaths wont to be taken at the Holy Sacrament upon the Communion Table, or the Holy Gospels. Some against all Oaths, only to prevent a possibility of Perjury. Bearing false Witness, condemned and strictly punished by the Ancient Church. A famous Instance of Divine Vengeance pursuing three false Accusers. Christians careful in the Conduct of their Actions. Their Integrity in matters of Distributive Justice: in Commutative*

Ch. I. **Primitive Christianity.** 207

tive Justice, avoiding all fraud and Part 2. over-reaching. S. Augustine's Instance. Nicotratuſ forced to fly to avoid the puniſhment of Cheating and Sacrilege. The Chriſtians unjuſtly accuſed of Sacrilege by the Heathens. The occaſion of it. Pliny's Teſtimony of The Honesty of Chriſtians. Theft and Rapine ſeverely condemned. Chriſtians for doing all the good they could. Their Care to right and relieve the oppreſſed. The Gentiles charged Chriſtians with Murder, and eating Man's Fleſh. A brief representation of the ſeveral answers returned to it by the Chriſtian Apologiſts. The true riſe of the Charge found to ſpring from the barbarous and inhumane praſtiſes of the Gnoſticks mentioned by Irenæus and Epiphanius.

HAVING given ſome Account of the Religion of the Ancient Chriſtians, both as it reſpected their *Piety* towards God, and their ſober and virtuous *Carriage* towards *themſelves*; we come in the laſt place to conſider it in reference to their *carriage* towards *others*, which the *Apoſtle* deſcribes under the Title of *Righteouſneſs*, under which

208 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. I.**

Part 3. which he comprehends all that Duty and Respect wherein we stand obliged to others; whereof we shall consider these following Instances: Their *Justice* and *Integrity* in matters of Commerce and Traffick; their *Mutual Love* and *Charity* to one another; Their *Unity* and *Peaceableness*; and Their *Submission* and *Subjection* to Civil Government.

I begin with the first, their *Just* and *upright Carriage* in their *Outward Dealings*. One great Design of the *Christian Law*, is to establish and ratifie that great *Principle*, which is one of the *prime* and *fundamental* Laws of Nature, *to hurt no man*, and *to render to every one his due*; to teach us to carry our selves as becomes us in our *Relations* towards Men. Next to our Duty towards God, the Gospel obliges us to be *righteous* to Men, sincere and upright in all our Dealings, *not going beyond, nor defrauding one another in any matter, to put away Lying, and to speak truth to each other as fellow-Members* of the same Christian Brotherhood and Society. It settles that *Golden Rule* as the Fundamental Law of all just and equitable Commerce, *That all things*
what-

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 209

whatsoever we would that men should do Part 3.
to us, we should even do so to them, this be-
ing the sum of the Law and the Prophets;
 than which as no rule could have been
 more equitable in it self, so none could
 possibly have been contrived more
 short and plain, and more accommodate
 to the common cases of Humane Life.
 Upon the account of these, and such
 like excellent Precepts, *Alexander Se-*
verus, the Roman Emperor had so great
 an honor for our *Saviour*, that he was
 resolved to build a *Temple* to him, and
 to receive him into the number of their
Gods; and though he was over-rul'd
 in this by some who having consulted
 the Oracle, told him, that if it were
 done, all men would become *Chri-*
stians, and the Temples of the Gods
 would be left naked and empty; yet
 in his most private *Chappel*, he had the
Image of Christ amongst those of many
 Noble *Heroes*, and *deified* Persons, to
 whom he paid Religious Adoration e-
 very Morning; and particularly for
 this Precept, *That what we would not*
have done to our selves, we should not
do to others (which his own *Historian*
 confesses he learn'd either from the
Jews or *Christians*, but most certainly
 O from

Lamprid. in
vit. Alex.
Sev. c. 43.
p. 568.

Ibid. c. 29.
p. 540.

Ibid. c. 51.
p. 577.

Part 3. from the *Christians*, in whose *Mouths* it so often was, and in whose *Gospel* it was so plainly written) he so highly valued it, that in all publick punishments he caus'd it to be proclaim'd by a Common *Crier*; nay, was so hugely fond on't, that he caused it to be written upon the *Walls* of his Palace, and upon all his Publick *Buildings*, that if possible, every room in his Court, and every place in the City might be a silent *Chancery* and Court of Equity.

So vast a Reverence had the very *Enemies* of Christianity for the *Gospel* upon this account, that it so admirably provides for the advance of Civil Righteousness and Justice amongst men; which, however it has been sleighted by some, even amongst *Christians*, under the Notion of *moral* Principles, yet without it all other *Religion is but vain*, it being a strange piece of Folly for any to dream of being *godly* without being *honest*, or to think of being a *Disciple* of the first, while a man is an *enemy* to the second Table. Sure I am, the *Christians* of Old looked upon Honesty and an upright Carriage as a considerable part of their Religion; and, that to speak *truth*, to keep their *words*,

Ch. I. Primitibe Christianity. 211

to perform *Oaths* and *Promises*, to act Part 3.
sincerely in all their *dealings*, was as sacred and as dear to them as their *Lives* and *Beings*. *Speech* being the great Instrument of mutual commerce and traffick, shall be the first Instance of their Integrity; They ever used the greatest Candor and Simplicity in expressing their Mind to one another, not pretending what was *false*, nor concealing what was *true*; *yea, yea*, and *nay, nay*, was the usual measure of their Transactions; a *lie* they abhorr'd as *bad* in all, as *monstrous* in a *Christian*, as directly opposite to that *Truth*, to which they had consigned and delivered up themselves in Baptism, and therefore would not tell one, though it were to *save* their *Lives*. When the Heathens charged them with Folly and Madnes that they would so resolutely suffer, when a parcel of fair words might make way for them to escape, telling them, 'twas but doing or saying as they were bid; and that they might secure their Consciences by *mental* Reservations; *Tertullian* lets them know that they rejected the Motion with the highest scorn, as the plain *Artifice* and Invention of the *Devil*. When we are

Tert. Apol.
c. 27. p. 26.

212 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 3. most severely examined (says *Justin*
Apol. 1. *Martyr*) we never *deny* our selves;
p. 43. counting it *impious* in any thing to
 dissemble or deny the truth, as we
 know the contrary is acceptable unto
 God: and though we could (as they
1^o. Apol. 2. told the *Emperors*) when questioned,
p. 57. *evade* or *deny* it, yet we scorn to *live*
 upon any terms, by which we must be
 forced to maintain our lives by *lies* and
falsehood.

This honest and ingenuous simplici-
 ty they practised to that exactness and
 accuracy, that for a *Christian* to be put
 to his *Oath*, was accounted a disparage-
 ment to his *Fidelity* and Truth. So *Cle-*
Stromat. *mens Alexandrinus* tells us; he that
lib. 7. approves himself and is tried (*says he*)
p. 728. in *this* [*i. e.* the *Christian*] way of pie-
 ty and Religion, is far from being for-
 ward either to *lie* or *swear*: For an
Oath is a determinative Assertion,
 with a calling God to witness for
 the truth of it: But how shall any
 one that is faithful, so far render him-
 self *unfaithful*, or unworthy of belief,
 as to need an *Oath*, and not rather make
 the course of his life a *Testimony* to him
 as firm and positive as an *Oath*, and de-
 monstrate the truth of his Assertion by
 the

Ch. I. **Primitive Christianity.** 213

the constant and immutable Tenor of Part 3. his Words and Actions. It's enough therefore (as he presently after adds) for every good man, either by way of affirmation or denial to give this assurance, ἀληθῶς λέγω, *I speak truly*, to satisfy any that apprehend not the certainty of what he says; for towards *those that are without*, he ought to have such a Conversation as is most worthy of Belief, so as no Oath should be required of him; and towards himself and those of his Party to preserve such an even and equitable Temper of Mind, as is a piece of voluntary Justice. This and much more he discourses to the same purpose.

For this and some other reasons, but especially from some mistaken places of *Scripture*, where 'tis said, *swear not at all*; some of the Ancient Fathers held all taking of an Oath *unlawful*; but besides that, those few that did, were not herein *constant* to themselves, the far greatest part were of another mind, and understood the prohibition either of swearing by *creatures* (which was the case of the *Jews*, and which our *Saviour* and *S. James* principally aim at) or of *light rash*,

214 Primitive Christianity. Ch. I.

Part 3. and false swearing. For otherwise that the Primitive *Christians* did not think it unlawful to take an *oath* in serious and necessary cases, is most evident. *Athanasius* speaking of his *Accusers*, whom he desired might be put to their oath, tells us, that the best way to attest the truth of what is spoken, is to call God to witness; that this (*says he*) is the form of Swearing, which *we Christians* are wont to use. And indeed though we had no other Argument, it would be plain enough from hence, that they served in the Wars, and frequently bore *Arms* even under the *Heathen Emperors*, which 'tis evident they could not do, without first taking a *Military Oath* to be true to their General, and to *die* rather than *desert* their Station. And this *Vegetius* an *Heathen Author*, though living in the Time of the Younger *Valentinian* expressly reports of them, that when their names were entred upon the *Muster-rol*, they were wont to take an oath, the particular Form whereof he there sets down, viz. *That they swore by God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the Majesty of the Emperor, which next to God is to be lov'd and honor'd by Mankind:*
This

*Apolog. ad
Constanti-
um Imper.
Tom. 1.
p. 528.*

*De re mili-
tar. lib. 1.
s. p. 33.*

Ch. i. Primitive Christianity. 215

This agrees very well with that account which *Tertullian* had long before given of the *Christians*, when being accus'd by their enemies of High Treason, amongst other reasons, because they refused to swear by their *Emperors*; he answers, that though they would not swear by the Emperor's *Genius*, their *Genii*, or Tutelar Deities being nothing else but *Devils*, yet they did swear by the Emperor's *Safety*, a thing more august and venerable than all the *Genii* in the World: In the Emperor's they own God's *Institution* and Authority, and would therefore have that to be safe which he had appointed, and accordingly accounted it the matter of a lawful oath; but for the *demons* or *genii* (says he) we use *adjurare*, to adjure them, so as to cast them out of men; *non dejurare*, not to swear by them, & thereby confer the honor of *Divinity* upon them. For the same reason they denied to swear by the fortune of the *Emperor*, because amongst the Heathens she was accounted a *Deity*, and honor'd with religious worship.

Thus we see, that they refused not to ensure and ratifie their Faith by the formality of an Oath, to which that they might add the greater Reverence

216 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 3. and solemnity, they were wont many times to take it at the receiving of the *Holy Sacrament*, as we find in the Case of *Novatus* and his Followers; for taking their hands wherein they held the Sacramental Elements within his own, he caused them to swear by the *Body* and *Blood* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, that they would not desert him. But because this may be thought to have been only the artifice of an *Heretick* to bind his Followers the faster to his Party; *S. Chrysostom* (though himself no good friend to taking Oaths) sufficiently assures us, 'twas customary to come into the Church, and to swear upon the *Communion Table*, taking the Book of the *Holy Gospels* into their Hands. The same appears from the case proposed to *Gregory Nazianzen*, by *Theodoret* Bishop of *Tyana*, and by the instance of *Evaristus Nazianzen's Arch-Deacon* at *Constantinople*, who had it reveal'd to him in a Vision, that some persons lay in wait for him, and that therefore he must presently be gone; the person that revealed it, assuring him he would knock off those Fetters that were upon him, if he would swear to him upon the *Holy Gospels*, that he would immediately

Euseb. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 43. p. 245.

Ad Pop. Antioc. Hom. 15. Tom. 1. p. 178, 179.

Epist. 219. p. 908. Sozom. H. Eccl. lib. 6. c. 30. p. 686. vid. Annot. Hen. Vales. p. 145. vol. 2.

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 217

mediately depart, which was accord- Part 3.
ingly done. And as their caution was
great in *taking* of an Oath, so their care
was no less in making of it good; they
knew that in this solemn Transaction
they did in a more peculiar manner,
calling God as a witness of what they
said, and a revenger in case of falshood
and the violation of it; this made them
greatly afraid of *perjury*, which they
looked upon as a Sin of a deeper and
more than ordinary dye; and one rea-
son I conceive, why some of the Anci-
ents were against all Swearing (and
Clemens Alexandrinus and *Lactantius*
confirm me in it) was, because they
would not come so much as within the
danger or *possibility* of Perjury. Such
as have sworn rashly, or in unlawful
Cases. * *S. Basil* earnestly exhorts to re-
pentance, and that they would not per-
sist in an obstinate defence of their im-
piety; and for such as are guilty of per-
jury, he appointed that they should be
suspended and banished the Communi-
on for *eleven years* together.

ὁ μὲν ἔν-
μινδὲ οἰ-
νὸς, πολλὰ
γὰρ ἡ δὲ
ἐπιτομή
Loc. supra
laudat.

Hic nos
pejerabit,
ne deum
ludibrio
habeat :
sed ne jura-

bit quidem : ne quando vel necessitate, vel consuetudine in perjurium
cadat. Lactant. Epirom. cap. 6. p. 744.

* *Epist. Caron. ad Amphil. can. 29. p. 31. tom. 3. Can. 64. p. 36.*

The

218 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 3. The like severity, though not altogether so great, they used in case of *bearing false Witness* : If any Christian falsely accused another before the Church (for in those days they allowed no Appeals to Heathen Tribunals) he was to be punished, *i. e.* suspended the Communion, the only punishment the Church in those days could inflict, according to the nature of the crime which he charged upon the other, according to the decree of the *Illiberine Council*, if he made good his charge; yet if he had concealed it a considerable time before he revealed it, he was to be suspended for *two years*; the reason probably being, because by this delay, the criminal person had had opportunity to *infect* others, by propagating his vitious Example to them. But that they might not set the door open, and give Encouragement to busie and malicious Tempers, they ordain'd, that though the person should be really guilty of the crimes he was charged with, yet if the Accuser did not sufficiently prove it *in Conventu Clericorum*, before the *Ecclesiastical Senate*, he should be punished with a *five years* suspension; and because then they had an honor and veneration for

Mini-

*Conc. Illiber. Can. 74.
p. 79. ubi
vid. not.
Albasp.*

I. Ch. I. Primitive Christianity. 219

Ministers above all other men, they or- Part 3.
dain'd, that whosoever should falsely ac-
cuse a *Clergy-man, Bishop, Presbyter, or* Ibid. can.
Deacon with any crime, which he could 75. p. 81.
not make good, should not be received
into Communion, even at the *Hour of*
Death. The truth is, they were exceed-
ing tender of any man's reputation, rea-
dier to add to it, than to detract from it,
or to fasten any undue Imputation up-
on him. S. Basil commending Gregory
Thaumaturgus, has this of him amongst
the rest: Out of regard (*says he*) to
the threatening of our *Lord*, he durst ne-
ver call *his brother Fool*: no anger, wrath
or bitterness proceeded out of his
mouth: *Slandering* he hated as a qua-
lity greatly opposite to a state of Salva-
tion: *pride* and *envy* were strangers to
that innocent and guiltless Soul: he ne-
ver approached the *Altar* till first recon-
ciled to *his brother*: All false and artifi-
cial speeches, and such as are cunningly
contrived for the slander and detraction
of others, he greatly abominated; well
knowing, that every Lie is the *Spawn*
and Issue of the *Devil*, and that God has
threatned to destroy all those that speak
Lies. And so indeed he oftentimes does
even in the world, not respiting such
per-

Ad Cleric.
Eccles. Neo-
cesar.
Ep. 63.
p. 95.
tom. 3.

Part 3. persons to the *Tribunals* of the other world; whereof we meet with this memorable Example. *Narcissus* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, a man of admirable piety and holiness of Life, shined with so glorious a lustre in the place where he lived, that the brightness of his Conversation offended the sore Eyes of other Men: Three more especially not able to bear the eminent strictness of his life, and being themselves guilty of very great enormities, thought to *escape* themselves by accusing him. Whereupon they laid a very hainous crime to his Charge, and to beget the greater credit with them that heard it, solemnly ratified it with their *Oaths*: The first, imprecating upon himself that he might be *burnt*, if it were not true: The second, that his Body might be *consumed* by some noysom and pestilent *disease*: The third, that he might lose his *sight*. The good man thought notwithstanding all this, he stood right in the thoughts of all true Christians, who knew his Life to be too clear and unblameable, to be *sullied* with the breath of such vile Fellows, yet not being able to bear it, withdrew himself to an *Eremit's* Life in the Wilderness. But the *restless* Eye of the divine vengeance quickly

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quickly overtook these *perjured* wretches, and caught them in their own snares; the first, by a little spark that casually, and whereof no account could be given, happened in his house, was in the night himself, *Family* and *House* universally *burnt* to Ashes; the second was from head to foot over-run and consumed by such a *disease* as he had wished upon himself; the third, that saw all this, and feared the righteous and inevitable vengeance of God upon himself, *confessed* the whole Plot and Combination, and testified his Repentance with so deep a sorrow, that with the multitude of his tears he lost his *sight*.

We have seen how exact the Christians were about their *words*, that they should be harmless and inoffensive, and the true Conveyances of their Minds; nor were they less careful about the conduct of their *actions*, whether of *distributive* or *commutative* Justice. For matters of *distributive* Justice, so far as it concerns a fair hearing and impartial determining of Tryals and Causes, rewarding the good, and punishing the bad, they had little opportunity to shew themselves; Christians in the first Ages being seldom invested

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Part 3. vested with an External *Authority* and Power, till the Empire submitted to *Christianity*, and then we find them executing their places with the most unbyassed Uprightness and Integrity. *St. Basil* speaking of an excellent person (though he names him not) who was sent to be Governor of *Neocæsarea*, where he was Bishop, but presently undermin'd and outed by the Accusations of some that could not bear his free and impartial Carriage, and his Temper so extreemly opposite to Flattery, says this of him, That he was a most rigid *Observer* of Justice, courteous and easie of Access to them that were *oppressed*; but his presence severe and terrible to the *Injurious* and Transgressors of the Law: He was the same to *Rich* and *Poor*, equally at leisure for both: Of all men, he exceedingly abhor'd taking Bribes, never favoring any beyond the Equity of his Cause; and which was above all, he was one that designed to reduce *Christianity* to its ancient Dignity and Perfection. The same *Nazianzen* reports of his own *Father*, and reckons it one of the excellent Properties for which he accounted him a *Christian*, even

*Ad Sa-
phron. Ma-
gist. Epist.*
332.
p. 325.

*In Land.
Patr. Orat.*
19. p. 290.

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even before he embrac'd *Christianity*, Part 3. that he so exactly observed justice himself, and so impartially administred it to others, that though he went through very great Offices in the State, yet he made not one Farthings *Addition* to his own Revenue, though he saw some before his Eyes, who with *Briareus* his hands laid hold upon the publick treasures, and therewith filled their own Coffers.

In matters of *Commutative* Justice, and ordinary Transaction between man and man, they observed the Rule, *To deal with others as they would be dealt with themselves*; they took no Advantage of any man's *Ignorance* or Unskilfulness, so as to grasp that Commodity at a far *under-rate*, of which they knew the *Seller* did not understand the true price and value; and that if he did, he would not part with it at such a price. To this purpose *S. Augustine* tells us, he knew a man (probably he means *himself*, though out of Modesty he conceals it) who having a *Book* offered him to be sold by one that understood not the *price* of it, at a very small *under-rate*, took the *Book*, but gave him the *full* price according to its just rate and

*De Trinit.
lib. 13. c. 3.
tom. 3.
col. 407.*

Part 3. and value, which was a great deal more than the Seller asked for it. And the truth is, in such cases advantage cannot honestly be taken of mens weakness or mistake, because no man, if he understood the true worth and value of his Commodity, can be supposed willing to part with it at a too-under rate. And if they were thus far from craftily *over-reaching*, much more from secretly or openly *invading* of what was another's right and property; no cheating or couzenage, no acts of dishonesty and deceit were allowed, or practised amongst them; or if any such were discovered, they were immediately protested against by the whole Society of Christians. *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, giving *Cyprian* an account of *Novatus* the Heretick and his Companions, tells him of one *Nicostratus*, that not only cheated his *Lady* and *Patroneß*, whose Estate and Revenues he managed, but carried away a great part of the Treasures of the Church (whereof he was *Chief Deacon*) the portion and maintenance of poor Widows and Orphans (a crime, says he, reserved for perpetual punishment, *i. e.* for the Judgment of God in the other world, being

too

Epist. 48.
p. 62. vid.
Resp. Cy-
prian. Ep.
sequent.

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too great for any in this) whereupon Part 3. he was forced to fly from *Rome* into *Africk*, to avoid the shame and prosecution of his Rapine and Sacrilege; though when he came there, they did not only *refuse* to admit him into Communion, but openly *exposed* the Wickedness of him and his Confederates to the Abhorrency of all men. By which may appear the falsity of that Charge of *Sacrilege* which the Gentiles brought against the *Christians*; to which though certainly it primarily respected their declared Enmity against the *Idolatrous Temples* and Worship of the *Heathens*: yet *Tertullian* answers; you look upon us (says he) as *Sacrilegious* Persons, and yet never found any of us guilty of *wrong* or *injury*, of any *rapine* and *violence*; much less of *Sacrilege* and *Impiety*. No, they are your *own* Party, that swear by and worship your Gods, and yet *rob* their Temples; that are no *Christians*, and yet are found to be *sacrilegious*. And afterwards he adds this further Vindication of them: As for us (says he) we deny not any *Pledge* that's left with us, we *adulterate* no man's Marriage Bed, we piously *educate* and train up Orphans, and relieve the

Ad Scap.

2. p. 69.

ib. c. 4.

p. 71.

P

Ne-

Part 3. Necessities of the indigent, and *render no man evil for evil.* If there be any that dissemble our Religion, let them look to't, we *disown* them for being of our Party; why should we be worse thought of for others faults? Or why should a Christian answer for any thing but what concerns his own Religion, which no man in so long a time has prov'd to be Cruel or Incestuous? Nay, when we are burnt and most severely dealt with, 'tis for the greatest *Innocency, Honesty, Justice, Modesty,* for our *Truth and Faithfulness,* and our *Piety* to the Living God. And that these were not a parcel of good words which the *Christians* spoke in their own behalf, will appear, if we consider the Testimony which *Pliny* (who was far from being partial to them) gives of them; for being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan* to give him an account of the *Christians*, he tells him, that after the strictest Examination which he could make even of those that had renounc'd

Lib. 10. ep. 97. p. 290. *Christianity*, he found this to be the greatest fault that they were guilty of, that they used harmlesly to meet to worship Christ, and at those meetings to bind themselves by a Sacrament [or an Oath] that they would
not

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not do any Wickedness, that they might be Part 3.
firmler obliged not to commit Theft, Rob-
beries, Adulteries, not to falsifie their Words,
or to deny any thing wherewith they
were intrusted, when 'twas required of
them.

Gregory Bishop of Neocæsarea, in a Ca- Can. 2, 3, 4, 5
p. 119, 120.
nonical Epistle, which he wrote to re-
ctifie several Disorders and Irregulari-
ties which had happened amongst the
Christians of those parts by reason of
the Inroads and Devastations which the
Goths and other barbarous Nations had
made amongst them, does amongst o-
ther things especially take notice, how
uncomely in it self, how unsuitable to
Christians it is to covet, and to grasp
what is another man's; how inhumane
to spoil the oppressed, and to enrich
our selves by the Blood and Ruines of
our miserable Brethren. And whereas
some might be apt to plead, they did
not steal, but only take up what they
found; he tells them this Excuse
would not serve the turn, that what-
ever they had found of their Neigh-
bours, nay, though it were their Ene-
mies, they were bound to restore it,
much more to their Brethren, who were
Fellow-Sufferers with them in the same

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Part 3. condition. Others thought it warrant enough to keep what they found, though belonging to others, having been such *deep losers themselves*. But this (he tells them) is to *justify* one Wick- edness with another; and because the *Goths* had been Enemies to them, they would become *Goths* and *Barbarians* unto others. Nor did they only keep themselves from doing *Injuries* to o- ther; they were ready to do them all the *right*, all the *kindness* that lay in their Power, especially to vindicate the Poor and Helpless from the power and violence of those that were too mighty for them. Therefore when the Fathers of the *Synod of Sardis* took notice, that some Bishops used to go to *Court* upon by-errands, and private designs of their own, they ordain'd, that no Bishop should go to Court, unless either im- mediately summoned by the *Emperor's* Letters, or that their Assistance was re- quired to help the *oppressed*, to right *Widows* and *Orphans*, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent and merciless Oppressors; and that in these cases they should be ready (either by *themselves*, or some *deputed* by them) to present their Petitions, to plead their Cause,

Can. 7, 8.

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Cause, and to lend them all the assistance Part 3. they were able to afford.

I should not in this place have taken any notice how far the Ancient Christians were from *Murder*, and offering violence to any man's *Life*, but that it was a common *Charge* brought against them by the *Gentiles*, that they used to kill and devour an Infant at their *Christian* Meetings, especially when any was first to be initiated into their Assemblies: the story is thus dressed up by the acute Heathen in *M. Fælix*: An Infant being covered all over with Meal, M. Fæl. p. 8. vide Tert. Ap. 6.9. p. 9. (the better to deceive the unwary) is set before him that is to be initiated and taken in; he, ignorant of what it really is, is appointed to cut it up, which he effectually does by many secret and mortal wounds; whereupon they greedily lick up the Blood, and ravenously tear off and snatch away the several parts of it; and with this Sacrifice their Confederacy and Combination is made, and by the Conscience of so great a Villany they are mutually obliged to silence. Such Sacred Rites as these being more horrid and barbarous than the highest Sacrileges in the World. To this Monstrous and Horrid Charge the *Christians* returned these

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Part 3. these Answers ; That they appeal'd to the common *Faith* of Mankind, whether they could really believe them to be guilty of these things, so *abhorrent* to all the Principles of Humane Nature, and to the Christians *known* Principles and Practices in all other things ; that they should measure the *Christians* by themselves, and if they themselves could not be guilty of such things, they should not suspect it by the *Christians*, who were endued with the same Principles of *Humanity* with other men ; that they were so far from being friends to *Murder* or Man-slaughter, that they held it unlawful to be present at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where mens Lives were so wantonly sacrificed to the Pleasure and Curiosity of the People ; that they accounted it Murder for any Woman by evil Arts to procure *Abortion*, to stifle the *Embryo*, to *kill* a Child in a manner *before* it be alive, it being much at one to *hinder* Life as to *take it away*, to kill a man, or destroy what *would* be one, seeing he truly destroys the *Fruit* that kills it in the *Seed* ; that it was not likely they should delight in *Man's Blood*, who never tasted any Blood at all, *abstaining from things strangled*

Tert. Ap.
c. 9. p. 8.
M. Fæl.
p. 25.

Athenag.
leg. pro
Christi.
p. 38. B. M.
Fæl. ibi.

Athenag ib.
M. Fæl. ib.
Tert. ib. p. 9.

M. Fæl. p.
25. Tert.
ib. p. 10.

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strangled, and from Blood. And that Part 3. the very *Heathens* themselves confessed this, when amongst the several *Arts* they used to discover whether men were *Christians*, they used to offer them *bladders* full of *Blood*, knowing that they held it unlawful to *taste* any; and therefore it was mightily improbable they should thirst after *humane* Blood, who abhorred even the Blood of *Beasts*: that they heartily believed the Re-^{Athenag.}
surrection of the Dead; and therefore ^{ib.} would not make themselves the *Sepulchres* of those Bodies which were to rise again, and feed upon them, as they did upon other Bodies which were to have no Resurrection: That the truth was, if this Charge was true of any, it was true only of the *Gentiles* themselves, amongst whom these things were daily *allowed* and *practised*; that *Saturn* (one of their chief Deities) did not only *expose*, but *eat* his own Children; to him Infants in *Africk* were offered in *sacrifice* by their own Parents, a Custom that openly continued till the Proconsulship of *Tiberius*, which though he abolished, yet it continued still in corners in *Tertullian's* days. To his Son *Jupiter* they offered *humane* Sacrifices, ^{Ibid.}

232 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 3. even in *Rome* it self, and that even to
Ibid. the time of *M. Felix*, as he himself testifies; which is no more than what
De Abst. *Porphyry* himself (after he had reckon-
l. 2. sect. ed up in how many parts of the World
56. p. 95. humane Sacrifices were in use) confesses
 was done at *Rome* in the Feast of *Jupiter Latialis* even in his time. Many other
 Instances of such barbarous practises are
 there produced by those two *Apologists*
 which they urge with great advantage
 upon their adversaries, whom they chal-
 lenged to make any such thing good a-
 gainst them.

And no sooner did Discipline begin
 to be regularly settled, but their Prin-
 ciples herein were every where confir-
 med by the *Canons* of the Church,
 either private or publick. The Woman
 that industriously made her self mis-
 carry, was adjudged to be guilty of
 Murder, and condemned to the same
 punishment, a *ten years penance*; which
 was adjudged to be the Case of any that
 brought forth upon the way, and ex-
 pos'd her Infant. By the Law of the
 State, made by the Emperor *Valenti-
 nian*, whosoever, whether Man or Wo-
 man, kill'd an *Infant*, was to be subject
 to the same Capital Punishment as if he
 had

Basil. ep.
Can. Con. 2.
p. 22.
Id. Can. 33.
p. 32.
Cod. Theod.
l. 9. tit. 14.
l. 1.

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had kill'd an *Adult* person, which may Part 3.
very well be understood even of *Infants* kill'd in the *womb*, the punishment
whereof was formerly for the most part
no more than Banishment. He that was
guilty of wilful Murder was by S. Ba- *can. 56.*
sil's Rule to undergo a *twenty years Pe-* *p. 36.*
nance before he was admitted to the
Sacrament ; though by several passages
in *Tertullian*, it appears that *Homicides*
in his time were more severely treated
by the Church ; for they were not only
bound to a Perpetual Penance, but
werenot *absolv'd* at death. But this Se-
verity shortly after began to relax, and
such persons, though obliged to acts of
Repentance all their Life, yet at Death
were absolved, and admitted to Com-
munion, as is expressly provided by the
Decree of the *Ancyran Council*. *Can. 22.*

Thus clear did the Christians all a-
long stand from any just Suspicion of
that gross piece of *Inhumanity* which
their Enemies so confidently charged
upon them. As for the *rise* and occasi-
on of this malicious Charge, it was
doubtless of the same growth with that
of their *incestuous mixtures*, (spoken of
before) both springing from the abo-
minable Practices of some *filthy* Here-
ticks,

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Part 3. ticks, who shelter'd themselves under the name of Christians, *Epiphanius* particularly reporting of the *Gnosticks* what the *Heathens* generally charged upon the Christians; for he tells us of them, that at their Meetings they were wont to take an *infant* begotten in their *promiscuous* Mixtures, and beating in a *Mortar*, to season it with *Honey* and *Pepper*, and some other spices and perfumes, to make it *palatable*, and then like *swine* or *dogs* to devour it; and after, to conclude all with Prayer: And this they accounted their *perfect Passover*. I am not ignorant that a learned man will by no means believe, that any of the Ancient *Hereticks* did ever arrive to so much *barbarousness* and *Immanity*, as to be guilty of such things, and conceives them to have been *feigned* merely out of hatred to those pestilent *Hereticks*; but there's little reason to suspect the truth of it, *Epiphanius* assuring us, that he had the account that he gives from the mouths of the *Gnosticks* themselves; and that many of the *women* who were deceived into those abominable Errors, did not only discover these things to him, but that he himself in his younger years, while he was in *Egypt*, had been assaulted by them, and

Her. 26. p. 43. vid. de Pbrg. seu Quintilian. Her. 48. p. 181, de Montanist. Zon. & Balsam. in Can. 7. Conc. Const. Desid. Herald. Not. ad M. Fac. p. 76.

Ibid. p. 48.

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and by all the arts of Flattery and Persuasion of Wantonness and Immodesty, had been set upon to joyn himself to them. And certainly, 'tis not imaginable, that a person so Venerable for Learning and Piety, as *Epiphanius* was, should impose upon us by feigning so gross and notorious a Falshood. Besides, whoever reads *Irenaeus*, in whose time these Heresies were most rise and predominant, and considers the account that he gives of them, which he mainly received from the persons of their own Party, after they were returned back to the Church, will see little reason either to think any Wickedness too great for them to boggle at, or to doubt of the Truth of what he reports concerning them.

Of their admirable Love and
Charity.

The excellent temper of the Christian Religion. The Gospel principally enjoyns Kindness and Charity. The Primitive Christians eminently of this Spirit. They accounted all brethren; but Christians more especially. Their mutual Love noted and recorded by their Enemies. Their mighty Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, to recover them from Vice and Error to Truth and Virtue. This the matter of their daily Prayer, and most serious Endeavours. even towards their greatest Enemies. Pamphilus his Charity in bestowing Bibles freely upon the Poor. Preachers maintained for converting the Gentile Phœnicians to Christianity. The famous story of S. John's hazarding himself for the regaining a young man debauch'd by bad Companions. Monica's care and solicitude about S. Augustine. Some that have sold themselves for Slaves that they might convert their Heathen or Heretical Masters. Christians

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stians not shy of communicating the Part 3.
Knowledge of their Religion. Their
Charity as it respected the necessities of
the outward Life. This noted in several
Instances of Charity. Their liberal
providing for the Poor. The bounty of
particular persons. Divers Instances
of it. The immense Charity of Epi-
phanus. Exemplary Vengeance upon
some that abused it. The Poor accounted
the Treasure and Ornaments of the
Church: represented in the case of Lau-
rentius the Deacon; and a story related
by Palladius. Their visiting and
assisting the Sick in their own persons :
eminently noted in the Empress Plac-
cilla, and the Lady Fabiola. The Chri-
stians care of their brethren in a great
Plague at Alexandria. Persons ap-
pointed on purpose to cure and attend
the Sick. The Parabolani, who. Their
Office and Number. Redemption of
Captives. Great Sums contributed
by Cyprian and his People for it.
Church-Plate sold to redeem Christians,
and captiv'd Enemies. Christians em-
bondaging themselves to redeem others.
The strange Charity of Paulinus Bishop
of Nola, making himself a Slave to ran-
som a poor Widows Son. Their care
about

238 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 3. *about the Bodies of the dead. Decent Burial very fit and desirable. A piece of Piety remarkable in the Christians of those times. Their abstaining from the common custom of burning the dead as barbarous. The great Cost they laid out upon their Funerals in Embalming, Intombing, &c. The Coptotæ, who. What their Office and Order. The Decani, or Deans in the Church of Constantinople: their Number and Duty. Their providing fit places of Sepulture. Their Cœmeteria, or Burying places in the Fields. Burying in Cities and Churches: When brought in, and to whom first granted. Their Cœmeteria underground. What kind of places they were. The great Number, and vast Capacities of them. A particular account of one out of Baronius, discovered in his time. How the Christians were enabled to all These Acts of Charity. At first all in common: After, by usual Contributions. The standing Stock or Treasury of the Church. This Charity of Christians largely attested by Julian and Lucian. Their Love and Charity universal. Doing good to Enemies. An Excellency proper to Christians. This manifested in several remarkable Instances. Plainly ac-*

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acknowledged by Julian himself. The Part 3. whole summ'd up in an Elegant Discourse of Lactantius, concerning Mercy and Charity.

THat the *Christian* Religion was immediately design'd to *improve* and perfect the Principles of Humane Nature, appears as from many other Instances of it, so especially from this, that it so strictly enjoyns, cherishes and promotes that natural *kindness* and *Compassion*, which is one of the prime and essential Inclinations of Mankind; where ever the Gospel is cordially complied with, it begets such a sweet and gracious Temper of Mind, as makes us Humble, Affable, Courteous and Charitable, ready and disposed to every *good Work*, prompt to all Offices of Humanity and Kindness; it *files* off the Ruggedness of mens Natures, banishes a Rude, Churlish, and *Pharisaical* Temper, and infuses a more calm and treatable Disposition. It commands us to *live and love as brethren*, to *love without Hypocrisie*, to *have fervent Charity amongst our selves*, and to be *kindly affectionated one towards another*. It lays the summ of our Duty towards others in this, to *love our neigh-*

240 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 2.

Part 3. *neighbour as our selves.* This our Saviour seems to own as his proper and peculiar Law, and has ratified it with his own solemn Sanction, *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another :* and then makes this the great visible badge of all those who are truly Christians ; *By this shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if you have love one to another.*

And so indeed it was in those first and best Ages of Religion ; for no sooner did the Gospel fly abroad into the World, but the Love and Charity of Christians became Notorious, even to a Proverb, the Heathens taking notice of the Christians of those times with this particular Remark, *see how these Christians Love one another !* They were then united in the most happy *Fraternity* (a word much used by Christians in those days, and objected against them by the Heathens) they liv'd as *Brethren*, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common Parent, (for in this respect that they had Nature for their common mother, they acknowledged the very Heathens to be brethren, though other-
wise

*Tert. Ap.
c. 39. p. 31.*

*Id. ib. M.
Fals. p. 26.*

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wife little deserving the name of *Men*) Part 3.
but upon much higher accounts, *viz.*
that they had one and the same God
for their *Father*, drank all of the same
Spirit of Holiness, were brought out of
the same *womb* of Darkness and Igno-
rance into the same light of Truth, that
they were partakers of the same Faith,
and Co-heirs of the same Hope. This
Lucian himself confesses of them, and
that it was one of the great Principles
that their Master instilled into them
that they should all become *Brethren*,
after once they had thrown off the Re-
ligion of the *Gentiles*, and had embrac-
ed the Worship of their great *crucified*
Master, and given up themselves to live
according to his Laws. The truth is,
so ready, intire, and constant was their
Kindness and Familiarity, that the Hea-
thens accused them for having *pri-
vy* Marks upon their Bodies, whereby
they fell in love with each other at first
sight. Indeed they never met but they
embraced one another with all the de-
monstrations of a hearty and sincere Af-
fection, saluting each other with an
holy kiss, not only in their own Houses,
but at their Religious Assemblies, as a
Badge and Bond of that Christian Fel-
lowship

*De mort.
Peregrin. p.
764. tom. 2.*

*M. Fel. lib.
& p. 7.*

Part 3. lowship and Communion that was maintained amongst them.

But the love and kindness of those *Christians* of old, did not lie only in a smooth Complemental Carriage, or in a parcel of good words, *depart in peace, be you warm'd or fill'd*; but in the real Exercises of Charity and Mercy. Now because the two great objects of *Charity* are the good of Mens Souls, and their outward and bodily Welfare and Happiness, we shall find, that the Primitive Christians were highly eminent and exemplary for both these. The Soul being of a much higher and nobler nature, and consequently infinitely more precious and valuable than the Body, they were accordingly infinitely careful and solicitous to save mens Souls, *to recover them out of the snare of the Devil*, and the Paths of Ruine, by making them *Christians*, and bringing them over to the *knowledge of the truth*; for this they prayed daily and earnestly. We Christians (says *Cyprian* to the *Pro-consul*) serve the one and true God that made Heaven and Earth, and pray to him night and day, not only for our selves, but for all men, and for the Safety of the Emperors themselves. From this

*Passio Cyp.
vit. ejus
annex. p. 17.*

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this no Injuries nor Unkindnesses could Part 3.
discourage them. *Justin Martyr* tells Dial. cum
Tryph. p.
254. the *Jews*, that they prayed for them, and
all others that were unjustly their Ene-
mies, that repenting of their Wicked-
nesses, and ceasing to *blaspheme Christ*
Jesus, who by the Greatness of his
Works, the Uncontrolableness of the
Miracles performed in his Name, the Ex-
cellencie of his Doctrines, and the Clear-
ness of the Prophecies fulfilled in him,
appeared to be altogether innocent and
unblameable, and that rather believing
in him, they might together with *Chri-*
stians be saved by him at his second
glorious Coming, and not be condemn-
ed by him to Everlasting Flames. We Id. p. 323
pray for you (says he) that *Christ* would
have mercy upon you ; for he has taught
us to *pray for our enemies*, to *love* them,
and be *merciful* to them. And after-
wards, when he had reckoned up all
those wicked and malicious Artifices
which the *Jews* had used both against
Christ and *Christians*, yet notwithstand-
ing all this (says he) we are so far from Id. p. 333
hating either you, or those who at your
suggestion believe these things of us,
that we *pray* that all of you may repent,
and obtain mercy from God, the gra-

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Part 3. cious and compassionate Parent of the World. The *Gnosticks* were the greatest scandal that ever was to *Christianity*, and the occasion of many of those Persecutions, and most of those horrible Calumnies which the Heathens brought upon the Christians, and yet see how *Irenæus* treats them ; We pray for them (says he) and beg of them not to continue in the Pit which they have digged to themselves, but to depart from their sottish and idle Vanities, to turn to the Church of God, that *Christ* may be formed in them, and that they may know the only true God, the Creator of the World. This we beg of them, loving them to better purpose than they think they love themselves : For our Love is true and wholesom, (if they will receive it) like a sharp Plaster indeed, but it will eat away the proud flesh, take down the swelling and vanity of their Minds ; for which cause we will not cease by all means to apply it to them. The same *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that though both *Jews* and *Gentiles* turn'd their backs upon the Doctrine of *Christ*, and charged them for being *impostors* and deceivers, yet they would not give over thus *honestly* to de-

Adv. Her.

l. 3. c. 46.

p. 314.

Lib. 2.

p. 110.

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deceive men, to make them of Loose Part 3.
persons to become Sober and Temperate, or to bring them on towards it ; of dishonest to make them righteous, of Unwise to make them Prudent, at least to bring them into the way to these things ; of fearful and timorous to render them hearty and courageous, especially as oft as they are to contend for their Religion and Piety towards God. How earnestly and passionately does *Cyprian* beg of the Proconsul *Demetrian* Ad Demit. p. 204. and the *Gentiles* to provide for their Happiness and Safety, to accept of the Councils and Assistance which the *Christians* offered, who loved them not the worse for all the Torments and Sufferings they laid upon them ; that they returned kindness for hatred, and by the Miseries they endured, shewed to them the way to Heaven ; that now was the time to make their peace with God, and to secure Salvation ; that there was *no place for repentance* on t'other side the Grave, the *stations* of the other World being fix'd and unchangeable ; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoyce with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.

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Part 3. In pursuance of this Design they spared neither *Pains* nor *Cost*, that they might instruct men in the way to Heaven. 'Tis said of *Pamphilus* the *Martyr*, that amongst other instances of his Charity, he used freely and readily to bestow *Bibles* upon all that were willing to read; for which purpose he had always great Numbers of those Holy Volumes by him, that as occasion serv'd he might distribute and bestow them. By these means mercifully furnishing those with these Divine Treasures, whose Purfes could not otherwise reach to the price of the Scriptures, far dearer in those days than they are since *Printing* came into the World. We find *S. Chrysostom* so zealous for converting the *Gentiles* to *Christianity*, that for this very end he maintained many *Presbyters* and *Monks* in *Phœnicia*, partly at his own Charge, and partly by the assistance of Pious and well-disposed persons, whose only work it was to *catechise* and instruct the *Heathens* in the Principles of the *Christian Faith*; and that the business might succeed more effectually, he procur'd a Law from the Emperor *Arcadius*, (yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*) directed to

En-

*Hier. adv.
Ruffin. tom.
2. p. 199.
& Euseb.*

*Theod. Hist.
Ecccl. l. 5. c.
29. p. 229.*

*Lib. 16. tit.
10. de Pag.
Sacrif. &
Tem. l. 17.*

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Eutychian, Prefect of the East, that the Part 3.

Pagan Temples should be orderly taken down, that so they being destroyed, the whole matter of the *Gentile* Superstition might be abolished. Upon the executing of which Law great Mutinies were raised by the Country People, many of the *Monks* wounded, and some slain, and the rest wholly disheartened to proceed in the business, (these doubtless being *those* very *Monks* against whom *Libanius* so severely declaims for so mercilessly destroying the Pagan Temples.) Whereupon *Chrysos-*

*Orat. de
Templ. p. 10.
Ep. 123.
to. 4. p. 756.*

stom (who was then in Banishment) writes to them to bear up with a Christian and invincible Patience, encourages them resolutely to go on in so good a work; tells them, that God would not be wanting to stand by them, and to reward them in this and the other Life, and promises them (though his *Incomes* at this time were very small) that their former Pensions should be paid them, and all things necessary provided for them. And indeed with how much care and solicitude the good man's mind was filled about this business, he sufficiently intimates in a Letter written to another person whom he had im-

*Ad Ruffin.
Presbyt. ep.
126. p. 763*

Q 4

employed

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Part 3. ployed about this Affair. Nor did they in those times regard *ease* or *safety* any more than they did *Cost* and *Charges* in this matter, exposing themselves to any dangers that they might do good to the Souls of Men.

*Eus. Hist.
Ecc. l. 3.
c. 23. p. 92.*

I might easily shew, that this Consideration had a great Influence upon the Sufferings of the Primitive Martyrs, willingly running any Hazards, cheerfully enduring any Miseries that they might gain others to the Faith, and prevent their Eternal Ruine. But that famous Story of S. John the Apostle shall serve instead of many, the *summ* of which is this: Coming to a place near *Ephesus*, in his Visitation of the Churches, he espied a *Youth* of a comely shape and pregnant parts, and taking hold of him, delivered him to the *Bishop* of the place with this Charge, (which he repeated once and again) *I commend this person to thee, to be looked to with all care and diligence, and that in the presence of Christ and the Church.* The Bishop undertook the Charge, received the Young man into his House, instructed him, and at last *baptized* him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the Strictness of his Care; but

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but the young man making an ill use of Part 3.
his Liberty, fell into bad Company, by
whose Arts and Snares he was seduced
into ways of Riot and Wickedness; till
despairing of all hope of Pardon from
God, he let loose the reins to all man-
ner of Exorbitancy, and agreeing with
his Confederates, they combin'd them-
selves into a Society of Highway-men,
and made him their *Captain*, who quick-
ly became as far beyond the rest in
Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in
Power and Authority. St. *John* upon
occasion returning some while after to
the same place, after he had dispatched
his other business, required from the Bi-
shop the *pledge* he had left with him:
who wondring, and not knowing what
he meant; *I mean* (said S. *John*) *the*
Young man, 'tis the Soul of my Brother
that I require. The old man with a de-
jected look, and tears in his eyes, an-
swered, *He's dead*: And being de-
manded by what kind of Death; an-
swered, *He's dead to God*; for, alas, he's
become a *Villain*, and instead of the
Church, is fled with his Companions to
the Mountains to be a Thief and a Rob-
ber. The Apostle renting his Cloaths,
and bewailing that he had so ill be-
trusted

Part 3. trusted his Brothers Soul, immediately call'd for a Horse and a Guide, and made haste to the Mountains; where being taken by those that stood *Sentinel*, he begg'd to be brought before their *Captain*, who stood ready arm'd some way off; but as soon as he perceiv'd 'twas *S. John* that was coming towards him, he began to be ashamed, and to run as fast as he could. The Apostle not regarding his own Age and Weakness, followed after with all his might; and when his Legs could not overtake him, he sent these passionate Exclamations after him; *Why, O my Son, dost thou fly from thy aged and unarmed Father? Take pity of me, and fear not, there is yet hope of Salvation for thee. I will undertake with Christ for thee; if need be I will freely undergo death for thee, as our Lord did for us, and lay down my own Life to ransom thine; only stay and believe me, for I am sent by Christ.* With that he staid, and with a dejected look, throwing away his Arms, he trembled, and dissolved into Tears; he embraced the Aged *Apostle* with all possible Expressions of Sorrow and Lamentation, as if again baptized with his own Tears. *S. John* assured him he had obtained his par-

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pardon of *Christ*, and having fasted and Part 3.
prayed with him and for him, and with
all the arts of Consolation, refreshed his
shatter'd and disconsolate *mind*, brought
him into, and restored him to the
Church.

This Story, though somewhat long, I
was the willinger to produce, both be-
cause so remarkable in it self, and so
great a Testimony of that mighty *ten-*
derness and compassion which they had
for the Souls of men ; for whose sake
they thought they could never *do*, ne-
ver venture far enough. St. *Augustine* *Confess. l. 9.*
tells us what infinite pains his Mother *c. 9. p. 155.*
Monica took about the Conversion of *tom. 1.*
her Husband *Patricius*, how unwearied-
ly she sought to endear her self to him,
by all the arts of a meek, prudent, and
Sober Carriage ; how submissively she
complied with his rigorous and unto-
ward Humors, how diligently she
watched the aptest times of Insinuat-
ion, never leaving, till at last she gained
him over to the Faith. Nor was her
Care and Solitude less for her Son
Augustine, who being hurried away
with the Lewdnesses of Youth, and in-
tangled with the Impieties of the *Ma-*
nichean Heresie, was the hourly Sub-
ject

Part 3. ject of her Prayers and Tears. She plied him with daily Counsels and Intreaties, implored the help and assistances of Good men, and importuned Heaven for the Success of all; not being able to gain any quiet to her mind, till *S. Ambrose* (with whom she had oft advised about it) sent her away with this assurance, *that it was not possible that a Child of so many tears should perish.* No sooner was his Conversion wrought, but her Spirit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Himself tells us, that discoursing with her alone some few days before her Death, concerning the State of the Blessed, and the Joys of Heaven, she at last broke off with this Farewel; *For my part, Son, I have now no further hopes or pleasures in this world; there was but one thing for which I desired to live, that I might see thee a Catholick Christian before I died; this my good God has abundantly blessed me with, having let me see thee despising the Felicities of this Life, and entred into his Family and Service; so that what do I make any longer here? Nay, so great a Zeal had they for the good of Souls in those days, that many did not stick to engage themselves in Temporal Slavery for no other*

Is. c. 10.

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other end but to deliver others from **Part 3.**
Spiritual Bondage. Thus *Serapian*, cal- *Pallad.*
 led *Sindonites*, (because he never wore *Hist. Laus.*
 more than one poor Linnen Garment) *c. 83. in*
 one of the Primitive *Asceticks*, sold him- *vit. Serap.*
 self to a *Gentile Player*, that serv'd the *p. 182.*
 Theatre; with whom he liv'd and un-
 derwent the meanest Offices, till he had
 converted him, his Wife, and whole Fa-
 mily to Christianity, who upon their
 Baptism restored him to his Liberty;
 whereupon he freely returned them
 back the *money* which he had receiv'd as
 the price of his servitude; which by mu-
 tual consent was given to the Poor.
 Coming afterwards to *Lacedæmon*, and
 hearing that a principal person of the
 City, a very good man otherwise, was
 infected with the *Manichean* Heresie;
 one of the first things he did, was to in-
 sinuate himself into his Family, selling
 himself to be his Slave; in which condi-
 tion he remained for two years toge-
 ther, till he had brought his Master and
 his whole Family off from that pernicious
 Heresie, and restored them to the
 Church; who did not only bless God
 for it, but treated him not as a *Servant*,
 but with that kindness and reverence
 that is due to a *Brother*, and a *Father*.

This

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Part 3. This was the good spirit and *genius* of those days, they intirely studied and designed the Happiness of Men, were willing and desirous freely to impart the Treasuries of the Gospel, and wished that in that respect all Mankind were as rich and happy as themselves. So far were they from that malicious Imputation which *Celsus* fastned upon them, that if all men would become Christians they would not admit it:

Orig. contr.
Cels. l. 3.
p. 116.

To which *Origen* flatly returns the *Lie*; and tells him, the Falseness of it might appear from this, that Christians (as much as in them lay) were not backward to propagate their Doctrine through the whole world; and that some of them had peculiarly undertaken to go up and down, not only in Cities, but in Towns and Villages, to bring over others to the true Religion. And that they did not this out of any designs of *gain* or interest to themselves was plain, because they often refus'd to receive *necessary* Accommodations from others; or if they did, they were such only as were barely and absolutely necessary for the present turn, when as far greater Liberality have been offered to them. Nay,
some

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some of the ancient *Canons* expressly re- Part 3.
quire, that no man, who has either *He-* Conc. Carth.
reticks or *Infidels* in his Family, shall be 3 Can. 18.
admitted to the Order either of *Bishop*,
Presbyter or *Deacon*, who has not first
converted those persons to the true
Christian Faith.

Having seen what Kindness and Cha-
rity they expressed to mens *Souls*, we
come next to that which respected
their *Bodies*, and the Necessities of the
outward Life; this they shewed in fe-
veral Instances; we shall consider some
of the most material. In the first place
they took special care to provide for
the *Poor*, and such as were unable to
help themselves: This *Cyprian* in his Ep. 5. p. 13.
Retirement, gave especially in charge
to the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* of his
Church, that by all means they should
mind the *Poor*, and furnish them with
whatever was necessary for them. *Dio-*
nysius Bishop of *Corinth*, testifies of the Enf. Hist.
Church of *Rome*, that they did not on- Eccl. 1. 4. 1
ly eminently provide for their own 23. p. 14.
Poor, but with great Liberality admi-
nister to the Necessities of other Chur-
ches, plentifully relieving whatever
Indigent Brethren came to them, or
where ever they were, though at the
great-

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Part 3. greatest distance from them. And of the
Hom. 67. in Church of *Antioch Chrysostom* tells us,
Matth. that in his time, though the Revenues
p. 586. of it were but small, yet besides its
 Clergy, besides Strangers, Lepers, and such
 as were in Bonds, it daily maintained
 above three thousand Widows and Maids.
 Indeed the Bounty of those Times
Vit. ejus was almost incredible. S. Cyprian up-
per Paul. on his turning Christian sold his Estate
Diac p. 11, to relieve the Wants of others, and
12. could not be restrained from it either
 by the Perswasions of others, or the
 Considerations of what he might be
 reduced to himself. After his entrance
 upon the Ministry, his Doors were
 open to all that came; from whom
 no Widow ever returned empty: To
 any that were blind he would be their
 Guide to direct them; them that were
 lame, he was ready to lend his Assistance
 to support them; none were oppressed
 by might, but he was ready to defend
 them. *Cæsarius*, S. Basil's Brother, made
Basil. ad only this short Will when he died,
Sophron. ep. I will that all my Estate be given to the
84. p. 156. Poor. *Nazianzen* reports of his Father,
tom. 3. that he was so kind to the Poor, that
Orat. 19. he did not only bestow the *surplusage*
p. 298. of his Estate upon them, but even part
 of

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of what was reserv'd for *necessary* uses; Part 3.
of his Mother, that one Ocean of wealth *Ibid. p.*
would not have filled her unsatisfied *299.*
desire of doing good, and that he had
often heard her say, that if it were
lawful she could willingly have sold
her *self* and *children*, to have expend-
ed the price upon the uses of the poor;
and of his Sister *Gorgonia*, that she was
immensely liberal, *Job-like*, her Gate
was open to every Stranger, she was
eyes to the *blind*, *feet* to the *lame*, and
a *Mother* to *Orphans*; her Estate was as
common to the poor, and as much at
their need, as every ones is to himself,
dispersing and scattering abroad, and
according to the Counsel of our *Savi-*
our, *laying up her treasure in heaven.*

They gave not only *according to*,
but *beyond* their Ability; trusting to
the goodness and fidelity of Heaven to
supply what *wanted*, which many times
made the Return with Overplus by
ways uncommon and extraordinary.

Sozomen relates of *Epiphanius* Bishop *H. Eccl.*
of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*, that having *lib. 7. c. 27.*
spent all his own Estate in pious and *p. 749.*
charitable uses, in relieving the needy,
and such as were by shipwreck and the
mercy of the Sea cast upon the Coast,

R

he

Part 3. he freely dispensed and distributed the Goods and Treasures of his Church (which by the Bounty of charitable persons from all parts, who thought they could not better lodge their Estates than in the Hands of so good a man, was very rich and wealthy) and that with so liberal a Hand, that the *Steward* or Guardian of the Church finding its stock begin to grow very low, with some resentment told him of it, charging him as too profuse and open-handed: All which notwithstanding he remitted nothing of his accustomed bounty to the Poor. At length all being spent, a *stranger* on a suddain comes into the Stewards lodgings, and delivers into his hands a great *purse* of Gold, without any discovery either who 'twas that *brought* it, or who 'twas that *sent* it. And indeed so vast and universal was the Charity of this good man, that it sometimes made him liable to be *imposed* upon by crafty and designing persons, whereof the *Historian* in the same place gives this remarkable Instance. A couple of Beggars meeting *Epiphanius*, and knowing the Charitableness of his Temper, to draw the greater Alms from him, agreed

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greed to put this trick upon him. One of Part 3. them lies along upon the ground, feigning himself to be dead, the other standing by him, passionately bewailed the death of his companion, and his own poverty, not able to give him burial. *Epiphanius* pitied the Man, perswaded him to bear his loss patiently, and not to expect that his Companion should in this world rise any more, bid him take care for his Burial, and withal gave him what was sufficient for it. No sooner was he gone out of sight, but the Beggar comes to his Companion, jogs him with his foot, and commends him for so ingeniously acting the cheat: *Rise* (said he) *and with what we have got let's be merry and jolly to day.* But alas! the *Comedy* was turn'd into a *tragick Scene*; the man was really dead, and could not be recovered by all his cries or stirring; which his Companion no sooner perceived, but with all haste makes after the *Bishop*, cries and tears his hair, confesses the cheat, and begs that his companion might be restored to life; but all in vain: the Bishop bids him be content, and tells him, that God would not undo what he had done. *Leaving a fair warning to men* (says the *Historian*)

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Part 3. Historian that the great God who sees and hears all things, reckons those mockeries that are put upon his Servants, as if done to himself. But this only upon occasion of that great Charity which they then upon all occasions extended to the Poor. The truth is, they then looked upon the poor as the *treasure* and *ornament* of the Church, by whom as by Bills of Exchange they returned their Estates into the other World. When

Aët. Laurent. apud Sur. ad diem 10. Aug. Tom. 4. vid. Ambros. Offic. lib. 2. c. 28. Tom. I.

Decius the Emperor demanded of *Laurentius* the Deacon of the Church of Rome, the Churches Treasures, he promised after three days to produce them; in which time, having gathered together the *blind* and the *lame*, the *infirm* and the *maim*, at the time appointed he brought them into the Palace, and when the Emperor asked for the *Treasures* he had promised to bring with him, he shews him his Company, Behold (said he) these are the Treasures of the Church, those *Eternal Treasures*, which are never diminished, but increase; which are dispersed to every one, and yet found in all. This passage brings to my mind (though it more properly belongs to the next instance of Charity) what *Palladius* relates of *Macarius*, a Presbyter

Hist. Laus. c. 6. p. 22.

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Presbyter and Governor of the *Hospital* at *Alexandria*; There was a Virgin in that City very rich, but infinitely covetous and uncharitable: She had been oft attempted and set upon by the persuasions of good men, but in vain: at last he caught her by this piece of *pious* policy. He comes to her, and tells her, that a parcel of Jewels, *Emeraulds* and *Jacinths*, of inestimable Value, were lodg'd at his House, but which the owner was willing to part with for five hundred pieces of money, and advises her to buy them: She catching at the offer, as hoping to gain considerably by the bargain, delivered him the money, and intreated him to buy them for her, knowing him to be a person of great piety and integrity. But hearing nothing from him a long time after, till meeting him in the Church, she asked him what were become of the *Jewels*? He told her he had laid out the money upon them (for he had expended it upon the uses of the *Hospital*) (and desired her to come and see them; and if the purchase did not please her, she might refuse it. She readily came along with him to the Hospital, in the Upper Rooms whereof

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Part 3. the *Women* were lodged ; in the lower the *Men*. He asked her which she would see first, the *Jacinths*, or the *Em-raulds*; which she leaving to him, he brought her first into the upper part where the *Lame*, *Blind*, and *Cripple-women* were disposed ; and see, said he, the *Jacinths* that I spoke of, : Then carrying her down into the lower rooms, he shewed her the *Men* in the like condition, and told her, *These are the Em-raulds that I promised, and Jewels more precious than these, I think, are not to be found ; and now, said he, if you like not your bargain, take your money back again.* The woman blushed and was troubled to think she should be ha'd to that, which she ought to have done freely for the Love of God. Afterwards she heartily thanked *Macarius*, and betook her self to a more charitable and Christian course of Life.

Next to this, their charity appeared in *visiting* and assisting of the *Sick*; contributing to their necessities, refreshing their tired bodies, curing their wounds or sores with their own hands. The *Sick* (saith the ancient Author of the Epistle in *Justin Martyr*, if it be not *Justin* himself) are not to be neglected ;

Epist ad
Zec. & St.
514.

Ch. 2. Primitive Christianity. 263

lected; nor is it enough for any to say, Part 3.
I have never learnt to serve and give Attendance: For he that shall make his Delicacy or Tenderneſs unaccuſtomed to any hardneſs to be an excuſe in this caſe, let him know it may ſoon be his own; and then he'll quickly diſcern the unreaſonableneſs of his own judgment when the ſame ſhall happen to him, that he himſelf has done to others. But there were no ſuch nice and ſqueamiſh Stomachs in the good *Chriſtians* of thoſe times *S. Hierom* tells us of *Fabiola*, a *Roman Lady*, a Woman of conſiderable birth and fortunes, that ſhe ſold her Eſtate, and dedicated the Money to the uſes of the poor; ſhe built an Hoſpital (and was the *firſt* that did ſo) wherein ſhe maintained and cured the infirm and miſerable, or any ſick that ſhe met withal in the Streets; here was a whole rendezvous of Cripples, hundreds of Diſeaſes and Diſtempers here met together, and her ſelf at hand to attend them; ſometimes carrying the diſeaſed in her Arms, or bearing them on her Shoulders; ſometimes waſhing and dreſſing thoſe filthy and noyſome Sores, from which another would have turn-

Epitaph.
Fabiola ad
Oceano. p.
199. tom.
I.

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Part 3. ed his Eyes with Contempt and Horror ; otherwhile preparing them food, or give them Physick with her own Hand. The like we read of *Placilla* the *Empress*, wife to the younger *Theodosius*, that she was wont to take all possible care for the lame or wounded, to go home to their Houses, carry them all necessary conveniencies, and to attend, and assist them not by the ministry of her Servants and Followers, but with her own Hands. She constantly visited the common *Hospitals*, attended at sick Beds for their cure and recovery, tasted their Broths, prepared their Bread, reached them their Provisions, washed their Cups with her own Hands, and underwent all other Offices which the very meanest of the servants were to undergo. Thus also the *Historian* reports of *Deogratias* the aged Bishop of *Carthage*, under the *Vandalick* Persecution, that having sold all the Plate belonging to the Church, to ransom the Captive *Christians*, and wanting places conveniently to bestow them, he lodged them in two large Churches, provided for the needy, took care of the sick, himself every hour visiting them both by day and night, with Physicians

Theodor. H.
Ecc. lib. 5.
c. 18.
p. 160.

Viet. titic.
de persec.
Vandal.
lib. 1. fol. 5.
p. 2.

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ans attending him to superintend their Part 3.
cure, and diet suitable to their several
cases, going from Bed to Bed to know
what every one stood in need of. Nay,
how often did they venture to relieve
their Brethren, when labouring under
such Distempers as seemed immediately
to breath *death* in their faces? Thus in
that sad and terrible Plague at *Alex-*
andria, which though it principally
raged amongst the *Gentiles*, yet seiz'd
also upon the *Christians*, Many of
the Brethren (says the *Historian*) out
of the *excessive* Abundance of their
kindness and *charity*, without any re-
gard to their own health and life, bold-
ly ventured into the thickest dangers,
daily visiting, attending, instructing,
and comforting their sick and infected
Brethren, till themselves expired and
died with them: Nay, many of them
whom they thus attended recovered
and lived while they who had looked
to them died themselves; as if by a
strange and prodigious *Charity* they
had willingly taken their diseases up-
on them, and died themselves to save
them from death. Thus 'twas with
the *Christians*, while the *Gentiles* in the
mean time put off all sence of huma-
nity,

Euseb. H.
Eccl. lib. 7.
c. 22.
p. 269.

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Part 3. nity; when any began to fall sick amongst them, they presently cast them out, shun'd their dearest Friends and Relations, left them half-dead in the high-ways, and took no care of them either alive or dead.

And that this work of charity might be the better managed amongst *Christians*, they had in many places (and particularly in this of *Alexandria*) certain persons, whose proper office it was to attend and administer to the Sick: They were called *Parabolani*, (because especially in pestilential and infectious Distempers they did *ᾠθευβάλλεοντες*, cast themselves into an immediate hazard of their lives) and were peculiarly deputed *ad curanda debiliū agra corpora*, (as the Law of the younger *Theodosius* expresses it) to attend and cure the bodies of the infirm and sick. Their numbers it seems were very great, insomuch that upon any tumultuary occasions they became formidable even to the Courts of Civil Judicature; upon complaint whereof made to the Emperour, *Theodosius* reduced their number to five hundred; which being found too little, by a second *Constitution*, he enlarged it to six hundred. The truth is, these

*Cod. Theod.
lib. 16. tit.
2. de Episcopis, &c.
§. 42, 43.*

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these *Parabolani* were a kind of *Clergy*- Part 3.
Physicians ; for that they were under an
Ecclesiastical cognizance is plain, being
reckoned up with the *Clergy*, and ac-
cordingly by the latter Constitution of
Theodosius, are appointed to be chosen
by, and to be immediately subject to
the *Bishop* of the place.

A third instance of their Love and
Charity, (and which *S. Ambrose* calls
the *highest* piece of liberality) was their
care of those that were in *Captivity*, *offic. lib. 2.*
groaning under the merciless Tyranny *c. 15. p. 42.*
and Oppression of their Enemies, to
relieve them under, and *redeem* them out
of their Bondage and Slavery. *Cyprian*
in a Letter to the Bishops of *Numidia*,
about this very thing, the redemption of
those *Christians* amongst them that had
been taken Captive by the *Barbarians*,
elegantly bewails their misery, and ear-
nestly presses their redemption, and as a
help towards it, sent them *Sestertium* *Rigalt. in*
centum millia nummum ; which *Rigalt.*
tius computes to twenty five thousand *Gronov. de*
pounds *French*, though others more *pecun. vet.*
truly reduce it to a much lower Sum, *lib. 2. c. 2.*
viz. seven thousand five hundred, or
two thousand five hundred Crowns ;
which he and his People had liberally
con-

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Part 3. contributed to it. Of *Acacius* Bishop
H. Eccl. lib. of *Amida*, we read in *Socrates*, that
 7. c. 21. when the *Roman* Army had taken seven
 p. 360. thousand *Persians* Captive, and would
 neither release them without a ransom,
 nor yet give them Food to keep them
 alive; this good Bishop, with the con-
 sent of the Clergy of his Church, caused
 all the Gold and Silver *Plate* and vessels
 that belonged to their Church to be
 melted down; ransom'd the Wretches,
 fed them, and then freely sent them
 home to their own Prince: with which
generous Charity the King of *Persia* (as
 he well might) was strangely amaz'd,
 finding that the *Romans* knew how to
 conquer an Enemy by *Kindness*, no less
 than by force of *Arms*. The like *S. Am-*
brose relates of himself, that he caused
 the *Communion Plate* of his Church to
 be broke in pieces to redeem Christians
 taken captive by the Enemy; for which
 though he was blam'd by the *Arrian*
 party, yet he elegantly defends the fact,
 as not only a justifiable, but a proper
 and eminent act of Charity. And in-
 deed 'tis the only case wherein the *Im-*
perial Constitutions make it lawful to
sell or *pawn* the Plate and Gifts belong-
 ing to the Church, it being otherwise
 made

Ibid. c. 28.
 p. 50.

Phot. No-
moan.
Tit. C. πέρ.
ἐκκλησί-
ας, καὶ οὐκ
ἐν, &c.
ἐσθ. β.
 p. 43.

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made *Sacrilege* to receive them, and Part 3. the things absolutely forfeited by those that bought them. This was very great, but yet we meet with a *stranger* Charity than this in the Primitive Church, some that have parted with their own liberty to purchase Freedom unto others; So S. *Clemens* assures us in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*, we have known many amongst our selves (says he) who have delivered themselves into Bonds and Slavery that they might restore others to their Liberty; many who have hir'd out themselves Servants unto others, that by their Wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted. Of which this one strange instance shall suffice. Under the *Vandalic* Persecution many Christians were carried Slaves out of *Italy* into *Africk*, for whose redemption *Paulinus* then Bishop of *Nola* had expended his whole estate; at last a widow comes to him, intreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only Son, then Slave to the King of the *Vandals* Son-in-Law: He told her he had not one penny left, nothing but his own person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her son's ransom; this the woman

Pag. 70.

Greg. Mag.
dial. lib. 3.
c. 1. p. 98.
Edit. col.
1610.

270 **Primitive Christianity.** Ch. 2.

Part 3. man look'd upon from a person of his quality, as rather a *deriding* her calamity, than a *pitying* of her case: but he assur'd her he was in earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took shipping for *Africk*, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop address'd himself to the Prince, begg'd the release of the widows Son, and offer'd himself in his room. The Issue was, the woman had her Son restor'd her, and *Paulinus* became the Princes Slave, who employ'd him in the dressing and keeping of his Garden. How he afterwards ingratiated himself into the favour of his Master, and came to be discovered to him who he was, how the Prince set him at liberty, and gave him leave to ask what he would, which he made no further use of than to beg the release of all his Country-men then in Bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully sent home with their Ships laden with Corn and Provisions, I omit as not pertinent to my purpose; they that are desirous to know more of it may read it in the Dialogues of *S. Gregory*, from whence I have borrowed the Story. This certainly was Charity with
a wit-

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a witness, an act that will find more to Part 3. admire and commend it, than to imitate and follow it.

A fourth instance of Primitive Charity, was the great care they took about the *bodies* of the *dead*, in giving them *decent* and where they could, *honourable* Burial; all men naturally have a kindness for their Bodies, and therefore desire, that what has so long been the mansion of an *immortal* tenant, may upon its dislodging be orderly taken down, and the ruines of it laid up with honor and safety. Man's Body besides that 'tis the cabinet of an invaluable Jewel, is a curious piece of artifice, *fearfully and wonderfully made*, the excellent contrivance of the divine omniscience, and in that respect challenges not to be carelessly thrown aside, or rudely trampled in the dirt. This seems to be the common sense of mankind, it being the care and practise of almost all Nations in the world religiously to enshrine the remains of their deceased friends in Tombs and Sepulchres; thinking it but reasonable to testify so much kindness to their departed friends, as to honour their Memories, and to secure from rude barbarous violence

272 **Primitive Christianity.** Ch. 2.

Part 3. lence what they left behind them when they put off mortality. Sure I am, this was eminently the Care of *Christians*, no dangers or threatnings could affright them from doing this last office to their deceased Brethren, especially such as had been *Martyrs* and *Champions* for the Truth. The *Roman* Clergy in an Epistle to them of *Carthage*, reckons it as one of the greatest instances of Charity, above that of relieving the poor, ministering to the Sick, or the rest which they there enumerate and reckon up; tells them that it could not be neglected without great danger, and that fidelity in this matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him.

Dionysius Bishop of *Alexandria*, speaking of the Plague that raged there (which we mentioned but now) commends the *Christians* for assisting their sick dying Brethren, that they closed their Eyes, laid them out, washed their Bodies, dressed and adorned them up for Burial, and carried them out upon their own shoulders, which they chearfully did, notwithstanding the imminent danger that attended it, and that it was not long before others were called to do the same Offices for them.

Epist. 2. inter Ep. Cyp. p. 9.

Ibid. ubi supr.

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them. Their Bodies they decently Part 3.
committed to the ground, for they ab-
horred the custom so common amongst
the Gentiles of *burning* the bodies of
the dead; which they did, not (as the
Heathens objected) because they
thought that their bodies once burnt to
ashes would be difficultly brought to a
Resurrection (a Doctrine which they
strenuously asserted, and held fast as
the main *Pillar* of their comfort and
confidence) but because they looked
upon it as *inhumane* and *barbarous*, and
contrary to the more ancient and bet-
ter usage of Mankind in this matter.
Tertullian calls this way of Burial by *De Anim.*
inhumation a piece of piety, and tells *6. 51. p. 301*
us they abstained from burning the
Corps, not as some did, because they
thought that some part of the Soul re-
mained in the Body after death, but
because it favor'd of Savageness and
Cruelty. Therefore their Enemies, to
do them the greater spite, did not only
put them to death, but very often burn
their dead Bodies, and sprinkle their
Ashes into the Sea, partly to hinder
them from a decent Burial, and partly
(as in that tumult at *Alexandria* under
Julian) that nothing might be left of
S them

Min. Feat.
p. 9. 28.

De Anim.
6. 51. p. 301

Ann.
Marcelline
lib. 22.
p. 1627.

Part 2. donethem than to be called in question, and that they had much rather be *put to death* for their Religion, than to have their *Lives* spared to them: By which meansthey became Conquerors, chusing rather to part with their Lives, than to do what you impose upon them. Let me advise you (says he) who are ready to despond with every *earthquake* that happens to you, to compare your selves with them: they in all their dangers are securely confident in their God; while you at such a time *neglect* the Gods, and have little or no regard, either to other Rites or to the worship of that Immortal Deity, but banish the *Christians* that worship him, and persecute them unto Death. So forcibly did the Majesty of Truth extort a Confession from its greatest Enemies.

The End of the Second Part.

Primitive Christianity;
OR THE
RELIGION
OF THE
Ancient Christians,
In the First Ages of the Gospel.

PART III.

*Of their Religion as respecting other
Men.*

CHAP I.

Of their Justice and Honesty.

*Christian Religion admirably provides
for Moral Righteousness. Do as you
would be done by, the great Law of
Christ:*

206 *Primitive Christianity*. Ch. i.

Part 2. *Christ. This rule highly priz'd by Severus the Emperour. The first Christians accounted honesty and an upright Carriage a main part of their Religion. Their Candour and Simplicity in their words; abhorring Lies and Mental Reservations, though it might save their Lives. Their Veracity such, as no need to be put to their Oaths. Some few of the Fathers against all Swearing: Allowed by the greatest part in weighty Cases. That they took Oaths proved from Athanasius, and their taking the Sacramentum Militare. The form of the Oath out of Vegetius. The same expressly affirmed of the more Ancient Christians by Tertullian. Why refusing to swear by the Emperor's genius. Oaths wont to be taken at the Holy Sacrament upon the Communion Table, or the Holy Gospels. Some against all Oaths, only to prevent a possibility of Perjury. Bearing false Witness, condemned and strictly punished by the Ancient Church. A famous Instance of Divine Vengeance pursuing three false Accusers. Christians careful in the Conduct of their Actions. Their Integrity in matters of Distributive Justice: in Commu-*
tative

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*tive Justice, avoiding all fraud and Part 2.
over-reaching. S. Augustine's Instance.
Nicostratus forced to fly to avoid
the punishment of Cheating and Sa-
cristledge. The Christians unjustly accu-
sed of Sacrilege by the Heathens. The
occasion of it. Pliny's Testimony of
The Honesty of Christians. Theft and
Rapine severely condemned. Christi-
ans for doing all the good they could.
Their Care to right and relieve the op-
pressed. The Gentiles charged Christi-
ans with Murder, and eating Man's
Flesh. A brief representation of the se-
veral answers returned to it by the Chri-
stian Apologists. The true rise of the
Charge found to spring from the bar-
barous and inhumane practises of the
Gnosticks mentioned by Irenæus and
Epiphanius.*

HAVING given some Account of the
Religion of the Ancient *Christi-
ans*, both as it respected their *Piety* to-
wards God, and their sober and vertu-
ous *Carriage* towards *themselves*; we
come in the last place to consider it
in reference to their *carriage* towards
others, which the *Apostle* describes un-
der the Title of *Righteousness*, under
which

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Part 3. which he comprehends all that Duty and Respect wherein we stand obliged to others; whereof we shall consider these following Instances: Their *Justice* and *Integrity* in matters of Commerce and Traffick; their *Mutual Love* and *Charity* to one another; Their *Unity* and *Peaceableness*; and Their *Submission* and *Subjection* to Civil Government.

I begin with the first, their Just and upright Carriage in their Outward Dealings. One great Design of the *Christian Law*, is to establish and ratifie that great *Principle*, which is one of the *prime* and *fundamental* Laws of Nature, *to hurt no man*, and *to render to every one his due*; to teach us to carry our selves as becomes us in our Relations towards Men. Next to our Duty towards God, the Gospel obliges us to be *righteous to Men*, sincere and upright in all our Dealings, *not going beyond, nor defrauding one another in any matter, to put away Lying, and to speak truth to each other as fellow-Members* of the same Christian Brotherhood and Society. It settles that *Golden Rule* as the Fundamental Law of all just and equitable Commerce, *That all things*
what-

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 209

whatsoever we would that men should do Part 3.
to us, we should even do so to them, this be-
ing the sum of the Law and the Prophets;
than which as no rule could have been
more equitable in it self, so none could
possibly have been contrived more
short and plain, and more accommodate
to the common cases of Humane Life.
Upon the account of these, and such
like excellent Precepts, *Alexander Se-*
verus, the Roman Emperor had so great Lamprid. in
vit. Alex.
Sev. c. 43.
p. 568.
an honor for our Saviour, that he was
resolved to build a Temple to him, and
to receive him into the number of their
Gods; and though he was over-rul'd
in this by some who having consulted
the Oracle, told him, that if it were
done, all men would become *Chri-*
stians, and the Temples of the Gods
would be left naked and empty; yet
in his most private Chappel, he had the Ibid. c. 29.
p. 540.
Image of Christ amongst those of many
Noble Heroes, and deified Persons, to
whom he paid Religious Adoration e-
very Morning; and particularly for
this Precept, *That what we would not*
have done to our selves, we should not Ibid. c. 51.
p. 577.
do to others (which his own Historian
confesses he learn'd either from the
Jews or *Christians*, but most certainly
O from

Part 3. from the *Christians*, in whose *Mouths* it so often was, and in whose *Gospel* it was so plainly written) he so highly valued it, that in all publick punishments he caus'd it to be proclaim'd by a Common *Crier*; nay, was so hugely fond on't, that he caused it to be written upon the *Walls* of his Palace, and upon all his Publick *Buildings*, that if possible, every room in his Court, and every place in the City might be a silent *Chancery* and Court of Equity.

So vast a Reverence had the very *Enemies* of Christianity for the *Gospel* upon this account, that it so admirably provides for the advance of Civil Righteousness and Justice amongst men; which, however it has been sleighted by some, even amongst *Christians*, under the Notion of *moral* Principles, yet without it all other *Religion is but vain*, it being a strange piece of Folly for any to dream of being *godly* without being *honest*, or to think of being a *Disciple* of the first, while a man is an *enemy* to the second Table. Sure I am, the *Christians* of Old looked upon Honesty and an upright Carriage as a considerable part of their Religion; and, that to speak *truth*, to keep their *words*,

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to perform *Oaths* and *Promises*, to act Part 3.
sincerely in all their *dealings*, was as sacred and as dear to them as their *Lives* and *Beings*. *Speech* being the great Instrument of mutual commerce and traffick, shall be the first Instance of their Integrity; They ever used the greatest Candor and Simplicity in expressing their Mind to one another, not pretending what was *false*, nor concealing what was *true*; *yea, yea*, and *no, no*, was the usual measure of their Transactions; a *lie* they abhor'd as *bad* in all, as *monstrous* in a *Christian*, as directly opposite to that *Truth*, to which they had consigned and delivered up themselves in Baptism, and therefore would not tell one, though it were to *save* their *Lives*. When the Heathens charged them with Folly and Madness that they would so resolutely suffer, when a parcel of fair words might make way for them to escape, telling them, 'twas but doing or saying as they were bid; and that they might secure their Consciences by *mental* Reservations; *Tertullian* lets them know that they rejected the Motion with the highest scorn, as the plain *Artifice* and *Invention* of the *Devil*. When we are

Tert. Apol.
c. 27. p. 26.

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Part 3. most severely examined (says *Justin*
Apol. 1. *Martyr*) we never *deny* our selves ;
p. 43. counting it *impious* in any thing to
dissemble or deny the truth, as we
know the contrary is acceptable unto
God : and though we could (as they
Id. Apol. 2. told the *Emperors*) when questioned,
p. 57. *evade* or *deny* it, yet we scorn to *live*
upon any terms, by which we must be
forced to maintain our lives by *lies* and
falsehood.

Stromat.
lib. 7.
p. 728.

This honest and ingenuous simplici-
ty they practised to that exactness and
accuracy, that for a *Christian* to be put
to his *Oath*, was accounted a disparage-
ment to his *Fidelity* and Truth. So *Cle-*
mens Alexandrinus tells us; he that
approves himself and is tried (*says he*)
in *this* [*i. e.* the *Christian*] way of pie-
ty and Religion, is far from being for-
ward either to *lie* or *swear* : For an
Oath is a determinative Assertion,
with a calling God to witness for
the truth of it: But how shall any
one that is faithful, so far render him-
self *unfaithful*, or unworthy of belief,
as to need an *Oath*, and not rather make
the course of his life a *Testimony* to him
as firm and positive as an *Oath*, and de-
monstrate the truth of his Assertion by
the

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the constant and immutable Tenor of Part 3. his Words and Actions. It's enough therefore (as he presently after adds) for every good man, either by way of affirmation or denial to give this assurance, ἀληθῶς λέγω, *I speak truly*, to satisfy any that apprehend not the certainty of what he says; for towards *those that are without*, he ought to have such a Conversation as is most worthy of Belief, so as no Oath should be required of him; and towards himself and those of his Party to preserve such an even and equitable Temper of Mind, as is a piece of voluntary Justice. This and much more he discourses to the same purpose.

For this and some other reasons, but especially from some mistaken places of *Scripture*, where 'tis said, *swear not at all*; some of the Ancient Fathers held all taking of an Oath *unlawful*; but besides that, those few that did, were not herein *constant* to themselves, the far greatest part were of another mind, and understood the prohibition either of swearing by *creatures* (which was the case of the *Jews*, and which our *Saviour* and *S. James* principally aim at) or of *light rash*,

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Part 3. and false swearing. For otherwise that the Primitive *Christians* did not think it unlawful to take an *oath* in serious and necessary cases, is most evident. *Athanasius* speaking of his *Accusers*, whom he desired might be put to their oath, tells us, that the best way to attest the truth of what is spoken, is to call God to witness; that this (*says he*) is the form of Swearing, which *we Christians* are wont to use. And indeed though we had no other Argument, it would be plain enough from hence, that they served in the Wars, and frequently bore *Arms* even under the *Heathen Emperors*, which 'tis evident they could not do, without first taking a *Military Oath* to be true to their General, and to *die* rather than *desert* their Station. And this *Vegetius* an *Heathen Author*, though living in the Time of the Younger *Valentinian* expressly reports of them, that when their names were entred upon the *Muste-rol*, they were wont to take an oath, the particular Form whereof he there sets down, viz. *That they swore by God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the Majesty of the Emperor, which next to God is to be lov'd and honor'd by Mankind:*
This

*Apolog. ad
Constanti-
um Imper.
Tom. 1.
p. 528.*

*De re mili-
tar. lib. 1.
p. 33.*

Ch. i. Primitive Christianity. 215

This agrees very well with that account which *Tertullian* had long before given of the *Christians*, when being accus'd by their enemies of High Treason, amongst other reasons, because they refused to swear by their *Emperors*; he answers, that though they would not swear by the Emperor's *Genius*, their *Genii*, or Tutelar Deities being nothing else but *Devils*, yet they did swear by the Emperor's *Safety*, a thing more *august* and venerable than all the *Genii* in the World: In the Emperor's they own God's *Institution* and Authority, and would therefore have that to be safe which he had appointed, and accordingly accounted it the matter of a *lawful* oath; but for the *demons* or *genii* (says he) we use *adjurare*, to adjure them, so as to *cast* them out of men; *non dejurare*, not to swear by them, & thereby confer the honor of *Divinity* upon them. For the same reason they denied to swear by the *fortune* of the *Emperor*, because amongst the Heathens she was accounted a *Deity*, and honor'd with religious worship.

Thus we see, that they refused not to ensure and ratifie their Faith by the formality of an Oath, to which that they might add the greater Reverence

216 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 3. and solemnity, they were wont many times to take it at the receiving of the *Holy Sacrament*, as we find in the Case of *Novatus* and his Followers; for taking their hands wherein they held the Sacramental Elements within his own, he caused them to swear by the *Body* and *Blood* of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that they would not desert him. But because this may be thought to have been only the artifice of an *Heretick* to bind his Followers the faster to his Party; *S. Chrysostom* (though himself no good friend to taking Oaths) sufficiently assures us, 'twas customary to come into the Church, and to swear upon the *Communion Table*, taking the Book of the *Holy Gospels* into their Hands. The same appears from the case proposed to *Gregory Nazianzen*, by *Theodoret* Bishop of *Tyana*, and by the instance of *Eugrius Nazianzen's* Arch-Deacon at *Constantinople*, who had it reveal'd to him in a Vision, that some persons lay in wait for him, and that therefore he must presently be gone; the person that revealed it, assuring him he would knock off those Fetters that were upon him, if he would swear to him upon the *Holy Gospels*, that he would immediately

Ensb. H.
Eccl. lib. 6.
c. 43.
p. 245.

Ad Pop.
Antioch.
Hom. 15.
Tom. 1. p.
178, 179.

Epist. 219.
p. 908.
Sozom. H.
Eccl. lib. 6.
c. 30.
p. 686.
vid. Annot.
Hen. Vales.
p. 145.
ed. 2.

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mediately depart, which was accord- Part 3.
ingly done. And as their caution was
great in *taking* of an Oath, so their care
was no less in making of it good; they
knew that in this solemn Transaction
they did in a more peculiar manner,
calling God as a witness of what they
said, and a revenger in case of falsehood
and the violation of it; this made them
greatly afraid of *perjury*, which they
looked upon as a Sin of a deeper and
more than ordinary dye; and one rea-
son I conceive, why some of the Anci-
ents were against all Swearing (and
Clemens Alexandrinus and *Lactantius*
confirm me in it) was, because they
would not come so much as within the
danger or *possibility* of Perjury. Such
as have sworn rashly, or in unlawful
Cases. * *S. Basil* earnestly exhorts to re-
pentance, and that they would not per-
sist in an obstinate defence of their im-
piety; and for such as are guilty of per-
jury, he appointed that they should be
suspended and banished the Communi-
on for *eleven years* together.

ὁ μὲν ἄν-
θρωπος οὐ-
κὲν πολλὰ
γὰρ δὲ
ἐπιτοκῆ
Loc. supra
laudat.

Hic non
pejorabit,
ne deum
ludibrio
habeat :
sed ne jura-

bit quidem : ne quando vel necessitate, vel consuetudine in perjurium
cadat. Lactant. Epirom. cap. 6. p. 744.

* *Epist. Caron. ad Amphil. can. 29. p. 31. tom. 3. Can. 64. p. 36.*

The

218 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.

Part 3. The like severity, though not altogether so great, they used in case of *bearing false Witness*: If any Christian falsely accused another before the Church (for in those days they allowed no Appeals to Heathen Tribunals) he was to be punished, *i. e.* suspended the Communion, the only punishment the Church in those days could inflict, according to the nature of the crime which he charged upon the other, according to the decree of the *Illiberine Council*, if he made good his charge; yet if he had concealed it a considerable time before he revealed it, he was to be suspended for *two years*; the reason probably being, because by this delay, the criminal person had had opportunity to *infect* others, by propagating his vitious Example to them. But that they might not set the door open, and give Encouragement to busie and malicious Tempers, they ordain'd, that though the person should be really guilty of the crimes he was charged with, yet if the Accuser did not sufficiently prove it *in Conventu Clericorum*, before the *Ecclesiastical Senate*, he should be punished with a *five years* suspension; and because then they had an honor and veneration for
Mini-

Conc. Illi-
ber. Can. 74.
p. 79. ubi
vid. not.
Albas p.

Ch. 1. Primitive Christianity. 219

Ministers above all other men, they or- Part 3.
 dain'd, that whosoever should falsely ac-
 cuse a *Clergy-man, Bishop, Presbyter, or* *Ibid. can.*
Deacon with any crime, which he could *75. p. 81.*
 not make good, should not be received
 into Communion, even at the *Hour of*
Death. The truth is, they were exceed-
 ing tender of any man's reputation, read-
 ier to add to it, than to detract from it,
 or to fasten any undue Imputation up-
 on him. *S. Basil* commending *Gregory* *Ad Cleric.*
Thaumaturgus, has this of him amongst *Eccles. Neo-*
 the rest: Out of regard (*says he*) to *caesar.*
 the threatening of our *Lord*, he durst ne- *Ep. 63.*
 ver call *his brother Fool*: no anger, wrath *p. 95.*
 or bitterness proceeded out of his *tom. 3.*
 mouth: *Slandering* he hated as a qua-
 lity greatly opposite to a state of Salva-
 tion: *pride* and *envy* were strangers to
 that innocent and guiltless Soul: he ne-
 ver *approached the Altar till first recon-*
ciled to his brother: All false and artifi-
 cial speeches, and such as are cunningly
 contrived for the slander and detraction
 of others, he greatly abominated; well
 knowing, that every Lie is the *Spawn*
 and Issue of the *Devil*, and that God has
 threatned *to destroy all those that speak*
Lies. And so indeed he oftentimes does
 even in the world, not respiting such
 per-

220 **Primitive Christianity. Ch. 1.**

Part 3. persons to the *Tribunals* of the other
Euseb. H. world; whereof we meet with this me-
Eccl. lib. 6. morable Example. Narcissus Bishop of
c. 9. p. 210. Jerusalem, a man of admirable piety and
holiness of Life, shined with so glorious
a lustre in the place where he lived, that
the brightness of his Conversation of-
fended the sore Eyes of other Men:
Three more especially not able to bear
the eminent strictness of his life, and be-
ing themselves guilty of very great E-
normities, thought to *escape* themselves
by accusing him. Whereupon they laid
a very hainous crime to his Charge, and
to beget the greater credit with them
that heard it, solemnly ratified it with
their *Oaths*: The first, imprecating upon
himself that he might be *burnt*, if it were
not true: The second, that his Body
might be *consumed* by some noysom and
pestilent *disease*: The third, that he might
lose his *sight*. The good man thought
notwithstanding all this, he stood right
in the thoughts of all true Christians,
who knew his Life to be too clear and
unblameable, to be *sullied* with the
breath of such vile Fellows, yet not be-
ing able to bear it, withdrew himself to
an *Eremit's* Life in the Wilderness. But
the *restless* Eye of the divine vengeance
quickly

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quickly overtook these *perjured* wretches, and caught them in their own snares; the first, by a little spark that casually, and whereof no account could be given, happened in his house, was in the night himself, *Family* and *House* universally *burnt* to Ashes; the second was from head to foot over-run and consumed by such a *disease* as he had wished upon himself; the third, that saw all this, and feared the righteous and inevitable vengeance of God upon himself, *confessed* the whole Plot and Combination, and testified his Repentance with so deep a sorrow, that with the multitude of his tears he lost his *sight*. Part 3.

We have seen how exact the Christians were about their *words*, that they should be harmless and inoffensive, and the true Conveyances of their Minds; nor were they less careful about the conduct of their *actions*, whether of *distributive* or *commutative* Justice. For matters of *distributive* Justice, so far as it concerns a fair hearing and impartial determining of Tryals and Causes, rewarding the good, and punishing the bad, they had little opportunity to shew themselves; Christians in the first Ages being seldom invested

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Part 3. vested with an External *Authority* and Power, till the Empire submitted to *Christianity*, and then we find them executing their places with the most unbiaſſed Uprightneſs and Integrity. *St. Baſil* ſpeaking of an excellent perſon (though he names him not) who was ſent to be Governor of *Neocaſarea*, where he was Biſhop, but preſently undermin'd and outed by the Accuſations of ſome that could not bear his free and impartial Carriage, and his Temper ſo extreamly oppoſite to Flattery, ſays this of him, That he was a moſt rigid *Obſerver* of Juſtice, courteous and eaſie of Access to them that were *oppreſſed*; but his preſence ſevere and terrible to the *Injurious* and Tranſgreſſors of the Law: He was the ſame to *Rich* and *Poor*, equally at leiſure for both: Of all men, he exceedingly abhor'd taking Bribes, never favoring any beyond the Equity of his Cauſe; and which was above all, he was one that deſigned to reduce *Christianity* to its ancient Dignity and Perfection. The ſame *Nazianzen* reports of his own *Father*, and reckons it one of the excellent Properties for which he accounted him a *Chriſtian*,
even

*Ad Sa-
phron. Ma-
giſt. Epiſt.*
332.
p. 325.

In Land.
Patr. Orat.
19. p. 290.

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even before he embrac'd *Christianity*, Part 3.
that he so exactly observed justice himself, and so impartially administred it to others, that though he went through very great Offices in the State, yet he made not one Farthings *Addition* to his own Revenue, though he saw some before his Eyes, who with *Briareus* his hands laid hold upon the publick treasures, and therewith filled their own Coffers.

In matters of *Commutative* Justice, and ordinary Transaction between man and man, they observed the Rule, *To deal with others as they would be dealt with themselves*; they took no Advantage of any man's *Ignorance* or Unskilfulness, so as to grasp that Commodity at a far *under-rate*, of which they knew the *Seller* did not understand the true price and value; and that if he did, he would not part with it at such a price. To this purpose *S. Augustine* tells us, he knew a man (probably he means *himself*, though out of Modesty he conceals it) who having a *Book* offered him to be sold by one that understood not the *price* of it, at a very small *under-rate*, took the Book, but gave him the *full* price according to its just rate
and

De Trinit.
lib. 13. c. 3.
tom. 3.
col. 407.

Part 3. and value, which was a great deal more than the Seller asked for it. And the truth is, in such cases advantage cannot honestly be taken of mens weakness or mistake, because no man, if he understood the true worth and value of his Commodity, can be supposed willing to part with it at a too-under rate. And if they were thus far from craftily *over-reaching*, much more from secretly or openly *invading* of what was another's right and property; no cheating or couzenage, no acts of dishonesty and deceit were allowed, or practised amongst them; or if any such were discovered, they were immediately protested against by the whole Society of Christians. *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, giving *Cyprian* an account of *Novatus* the Heretick and his Companions, tells him of one *Nicostratus*, that not only cheated his *Lady* and *Patroneß*, whose Estate and Revenues he managed, but carried away a great part of the Treasures of the Church (whereof he was *Chief Deacon*) the portion and maintenance of poor Widows and Orphans (a crime, says he, reserved for perpetual punishment, *i. e.* for the Judgment of God in the other world, being

too

Epist. 48.
p. 62. *vid.*
Resp. *Cy-*
prian. *Ep.*
sequent.

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too great for any in this) whereupon Part 3.
he was forced to fly from *Rome* into
Africk, to avoid the shame and prose-
cution of his Rapine and Sacrilege;
though when he came there, they did
not only *refuse* to admit him into Com-
munion, but openly *exposed* the Wick-
edness of him and his Confederates to
the Abhorrency of all men. By which
may appear the falsity of that Charge of
Sacrilege which the Gentiles brought
against the *Christians*; to which though
certainly it primarily respected their
declared Enmity against the *Idolatrous*
Temples and Worship of the *Heathens*:
yet *Tertullian* answers; you look upon *Ad Scap.*
us (says he) as *Sacrilegious* Persons, and 2. p. 69.
yet never found any of us guilty of
wrong or *injury*, of any *rapine* and *vio-*
lence; much less of *Sacrilege* and *Im-*
piety. No, they are your *own* Party,
that swear by and worship your Gods,
and yet *rob* their Temples; that are no
Christians, and yet are found to be *sa-*
crilegious. And afterwards he adds this
further Vindication of them: As for
us (says he) we deny not any *Pledge* *Id. c. 4.*
that's left with us, we *adulterate* no *p. 71.*
man's Marriage Bed, we piously *educate*
and train up Orphans, and relieve the

P

Ne-

Part 3. Necessities of the indigent, and *render no man evil for evil.* If there be any that dissemble our Religion, let them look to't, we *disown* them for being of our Party; why should we be worse thought of for others faults? Or why should a Christian answer for any thing but what concerns his own Religion, which no man in so long a time has prov'd to be Cruel or Incestuous? Nay, when we are burnt and most severely dealt with, 'tis for the greatest *Innocency, Honesty, Justice, Modesty*, for our *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, and our *Piety* to the Living God. And that these were not a parcel of good words which the *Christians* spoke in their own behalf, will appear, if we consider the Testimony which *Pliny* (who was far from being partial to them) gives of them; for being commanded by the Emperor *Trajan* to give him an account of the *Christians*, he tells him, that after the strictest Examination which he could make even of those that had renounc'd

Lib. 10. ep. 97. p. 290. *Christianity*, he found this to be the greatest fault that they were guilty of; that they used harmlesly to meet to worship *Christ*, and at those meetings to bind themselves by a *Sacrament* [or an *Oath*] that they would
not

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not do any Wickedness, that they might be Part 3.
firmler obliged not to commit Theft, Rob-
beries, Adulteries, not to falsifie their Words,
or to deny any thing wherewith they
were intrusted, when 'twas required of
them.

Gregory Bishop of Neocæsarea, in a Ca- Can. 2, 3, 4, 5
p. 119, 120.
nonical Epistle, which he wrote to re-
ctifie several Disorders and Irregulari-
ties which had happened amongst the
Christians of those parts by reason of
the Inroads and Devastations which the
Goths and other barbarous Nations had
made amongst them, does amongst o-
ther things especially take notice, how
uncomely in it self, how *unsuitable* to
Christians it is to *covet*, and to grasp
what is *another* man's; how inhumane
to *spoil* the oppressed, and to enrich
our selves by the Blood and Ruines of
our miserable Brethren. And whereas
some might be apt to plead, they did
not *steal*, but only take up what they
found; he tells them this Excuse
would not serve the turn, that what-
ever they had found of their *Neigh-*
bours, nay, though it were their *Enc-*
mies, they were bound to *restore* it,
much more to their *Brethren*, who were
Fellow-Sufferers with them in the same

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Part 3. condition. Others thought it warrant enough to keep what they found, though belonging to others, having been such *deep losers themselves*. But this (he tells them) is to *justify* one Wick- edness with another; and because the *Goths* had been Enemies to them, they would become *Goths* and *Barbarians* unto others. Nor did they only keep themselves from doing *Injuries* to o- ther; they were ready to do them all the *right*, all the *kindness* that lay in their Power, especially to vindicate the Poor and Helpless from the power and violence of those that were too mighty for them. Therefore when the Fathers of the *Synod of Sardis* took notice, that some Bishops used to go to *Court* upon by-errands, and private designs of their own, they ordain'd, that no Bishop should go to Court, unless either im- mediately summoned by the *Emperor's* Letters, or that their Assistance was re- quired to help the *oppressed*, to *right Widows* and *Orphans*, and to rescue them from the unjust Grasps of potent and merciless Oppressors; and that in these cases they should be ready (either by *themselves*, or some *deputed* by them) to present their Petitions, to plead their Cause,

Can. 7, 8.

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Cause, and to lend them all the assistance Part 3. they were able to afford.

I should not in this place have taken any notice how far the Ancient Christians were from *Murder*, and offering violence to any man's *Life*, but that it was a common *Charge* brought against them by the *Gentiles*, that they used to *kill* and *devour* an *Infant* at their *Christian Meetings*, especially when any was first to be initiated into their *Assemblies*: the story is thus dressed up by the acute *Heathen* in *M. Felix*: *An Infant being covered all over with Meal*, M. Fel. p. 8. vide *(the better to deceive the unwary)* Text. Ap. c. 9. p. 9. *is set before him that is to be initiated and taken in; he, ignorant of what it really is, is appointed to cut it up, which he effectually does by many secret and mortal wounds; whereupon they greedily lick up the Blood, and ravenously tear off and snatch away the several parts of it; and with this Sacrifice their Confederacy and Combination is made, and by the Conscience of so great a Villany they are mutually obliged to silence. Such Sacred Rites as these being more horrid and barbarous than the highest Sacrileges in the World. To this Monstrous and Horrid Charge the Christians returned*

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Part 3. these Answers ; That they appeal'd to the common *Faith* of Mankind, whether they could really believe them to be guilty of these things, so *abhorrent* to all the Principles of Humane Nature, and to the Christians *known* Principles and Practices in all other things ; that they should measure the *Christians* by themselves, and if they themselves could not be guilty of such things, they should not suspect it by the *Christians*, who were endued with the same Principles of *Humanity* with other men ; that they were so far from being friends to *Murder* or Man-slaughter, that they held it unlawful to be present at the *Gladiatory Sports*, where mens Lives were so wantonly sacrificed to the Pleasure and Curiosity of the People ; that they accounted it Murder for any Woman by evil Arts to procure *Abortion*, to stifle the *Embryo*, to kill a Child in a manner *before* it be alive, it being much at one to *hinder* Life as to *take it away*, to kill a man, or destroy what *would be* one, seeing he truly destroys the *Fruit* that kills it in the *Seed* ; that it was not likely they should delight in *Man's Blood*, who never tasted any Blood at all, *abstaining from things strangled*

Tert. Ap.
c. 9. p. 8.
M. Fæl.
p. 25.

Athenag.
leg. pro
Christi. r.
p. 38. B. M.
Fæl. ibid.

Athenag. ib.
M. Fæl. ib.
Tert. ib. p. 9.

M. Fæl. p.
26. Tert.
ib. p. 10.

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strangled, and from Blood. And that Part 3. the very *Heathens* themselves confessed this, when amongst the several *Arts* they used to discover whether men were *Christians*, they used to offer them *bladders* full of *Blood*, knowing that they held it unlawful to *taste* any; and therefore it was mightily improbable they should thirst after *humane* Blood, who abhorred even the Blood of *Beasts*: that they heartily believed the *Re-*^{Athenag.}
surrection of the Dead; and therefore ^{ib.} would not make themselves the *Sepulchres* of those Bodies which were to *rise* again, and feed upon them, as they did upon other Bodies which were to have no Resurrection: That the truth was, if this Charge was true of any, it was true only of the *Gentiles* themselves, amongst whom these things were daily *allowed* and *practised*; that *Saturn* (one of their chief Deities) did not only *expose*, but *eat* his own Children; to him Infants in *Africk* were offered in *sacrifice* by their own Parents, a Custom that openly continued till the Proconsulship of *Tiberius*, which though he abolished, yet it continued still in corners in *Tertullian's* days. To his Son *Jupiter* they offered *humane* Sacrifices, *Ibid.*

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Part 3. even in *Rome* it self, and that even to
Ibid. the time of *M. Fælix*, as he himself testifies; which is no more than what
De Abst. *Porphyry* himself (after he had reckon-
l. 2. sect. ed up in how many parts of the World
56. p. 95. humane Sacrifices were in use) confesses was done at *Rome* in the Feast of *Jupiter Latialis* even in his time. Many other Instances of such barbarous practises are there produced by those two *Apologists* which they urge with great advantage upon their adversaries, whom they challenged to make any such thing good against them.

And no sooner did Discipline begin to be regularly settled, but their Principles herein were every where confirmed by the *Canons* of the Church, either private or publick. The Woman
Basil. ep. that industriously made her self *mis-*
Can. Con. 2. carry, was adjudged to be guilty of
p. 22. Murder, and condemned to the same
Io. Can. 33. punishment, a *ten years penance*; which
p. 32. was adjudged to be the Case of any that
Cod. Theod. brought forth upon the way, and *ex-*
l. 9. tit. 14. pos'd her Infant. By the Law of the
i. 1. State, made by the Emperor *Valentinian*, whosoever, whether Man or Woman, kill'd an *Infant*, was to be subject to the same Capital Punishment as if he
 had

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had kill'd an *Adult* person, which may Part 3.
very well be understood even of *In-*
fants kill'd in the *womb*, the punishment
whereof was formerly for the most part
no more than Banishment. He that was
guilty of wilful Murder was by S. Ba- *can. 56.*
sil's Rule to undergo a *twenty years Pe-* *p. 36.*
nance before he was admitted to the
Sacrament ; though by several passages
in *Tertullian*, it appears that *Homicides*
in his time were more severely treated
by the Church ; for they were not only
bound to a Perpetual Penance, but
werenot *absolv'd* at death. But this Se-
verity shortly after began to relax, and
such persons, though obliged to acts of
Repentance all their Life, yet at Death
were absolved, and admitted to Com-
munion, as is expressly provided by the
Decree of the *Ancyran Council*. *Can. 22.*

Thus clear did the Christians all a-
long stand from any just Suspicion of
that gross piece of *Inhumanity* which
their Enemies so confidently charged
upon them. As for the *rise* and occasi-
on of this malicious Charge, it was
doubtless of the same growth with that
of their *incestuous mixtures*, (spoken of
before) both springing from the abo-
minable Practices of some *filthy Here-*
ticks,

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Part 3. ticks, who shelter'd themselves under the name of Christians, *Epiphanius* particularly reporting of the *Gnosticks* what the *Heathens* generally charged upon the Christians; for he tells us of them, that at their Meetings they were wont to take an *infant* begotten in their *promiscuous* Mixtures, and beating in a *Mortar*, to season it with *Honey* and *Pepper*, and some other spices and perfumes, to make it *palatable*, and then like *swine* or *dogs* to devour it; and after, to conclude all with Prayer: And this they accounted their *perfect Passover*. I am not ignorant that a learned man will by no means believe, that any of the Ancient *Hereticks* did ever arrive to so much *barbarousness* and *Immanity*, as to be guilty of such things, and conceives them to have been *feigned* merely out of hatred to those pestilent *Hereticks*; but there's little reason to suspect the truth of it, *Epiphanius* assuring us, that he had the account that he gives from the mouths of the *Gnosticks* themselves; and that many of the *women* who were deceived into those abominable Errors, did not only discover these things to him, but that he himself in his younger years, while he was in *Egypt*, had been assaulted by them, and

Her. 26. p. 43. vid. de Phryg. seu Quintilian. Her. 48. p. 181, de Montanist. Zon. & Balsam. in Can. 7. Conc. Const. Desid. Herald. Not. ad M. Fael. p. 76.

Ibid. p. 48.

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and by all the arts of Flattery and Persuasion of Wantonness and Immodesty, had been set upon to joyn himself to them. And certainly, 'tis not imaginable, that a person so Venerable for Learning and Piety, as *Epiphanius* was, should impose upon us by feigning so gross and notorious a Falshood. Besides, whoever reads *Irenæus*, in whose time these Heresies were most rife and predominant, and considers the account that he gives of them, which he mainly received from the persons of their own Party, after they were returned back to the Church, will see little reason either to think any Wickedness *too great* for them to boggle at, or to doubt of the Truth of what he reports concerning them.

CHAP.

Of their admirable Love and
Charity.

The excellent temper of the Christian Religion. The Gospel principally enjoyns Kindness and Charity. The Primitive Christians eminently of this Spirit. They accounted all brethren; but Christians more especially. Their mutual Love noted and recorded by their Enemies. Their mighty Zeal and Charity for the Souls of Men, to recover them from Vice and Error to Truth and Virtue. This the matter of their daily Prayer, and most serious Endeavours. even towards their greatest Enemies. Pamphilus his Charity in bestowing Bibles freely upon the Poor. Preachers maintained for converting the Gentile Phœnicians to Christianity. The famous story of S. John's hazarding himself for the regaining a young man debauch'd by bad Companions. Monica's care and solicitude about S. Augustine. Some that have sold themselves for Slaves that they might convert their Heathen or Heretical Masters. Christians

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stians not shy of communicating the Part 3.
Knowledge of their Religion. Their
Charity as it respected the necessities of
the outward Life. This noted in several
Instances of Charity. Their liberal
providing for the Poor. The bounty of
particular persons. Divers Instances
of it. The immense Charity of Epi-
phanus. Exemplary Vengeance upon
some that abused it. The Poor account-
ed the Treasure and Ornaments of the
Church: represented in the case of Lau-
rentius the Deacon, and a story relat-
ed by Palladius. Their visiting and
assisting the Sick in their own persons :
eminently noted in the Empress Pla-
cilla, and the Lady Fabiola. The Chri-
stians care of their brethren in a great
Plague at Alexandria. Persons ap-
pointed on purpose to cure and attend
the Sick. The Parabolani, who. Their
Office and Number. Redemption of
Captives. Great Summs contributed
by Cyprian and his People for it.
Church-Plate sold to redeem Christians,
nay, captiv'd Enemies. Christians em-
bondaging themselves to redeem others.
The strange Charity of Paulinus Bishop
of Nola, making himself a Slave to ran-
som a poor Widows Son. Their care
about

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Part 3. *about the Bodies of the dead. Decent Burial very fit and desirable. A piece of Piety remarkable in the Christians of those times. Their abstaining from the common custom of burning the dead as barbarous. The great Cost they laid out upon their Funerals in Embalming, Intombing, &c. The Copiotæ, who. What their Office and Order. The Decani, or Deans in the Church of Constantinople: their Number and Duty. Their providing fit places of Sepulture. Their Cœmeteria, or Burying places in the Fields. Burying in Cities and Churches: When brought in, and to whom first granted. Their Cœmeteria underground. What kind of places they were. The great Number, and vast Capacities of them. A particular account of one out of Baronius, discovered in his time. How the Christians were enabled to all These Acts of Charity. At first all in common: After, by usual Contributions. The standing Stock or Treasury of the Church. This Charity of Christians largely attested by Julian and Lucian. Their Love and Charity universal. Doing good to Enemies. An Excellency proper to Christians. This manifested in several remarkable Instances. Plainly*
ac-

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*acknowledged by Julian himself. The Part 3.
whole summ'd up in an Elegant Dis-
course of Lactantius, concerning Mer-
cy and Charity.*

THat the *Christian* Religion was im-
mediately design'd to *improve* and
perfect the Principles of Humane Na-
ture, appears as from many other In-
stances of it, so especially from this,
that it so strictly enjoyns, cherishes and
promotes that natural *kindness* and *Com-
passion*, which is one of the prime
and essential Inclinations of Mankind;
where ever the Gospel is cordially com-
plied with, it begets such a sweet and
gracious Temper of Mind, as makes us
Humble, Affable, Courteous and Cha-
ritable, ready and disposed to every
good Work, prompt to all Offices of Hu-
manity and Kindness; it *files* off the
Ruggedness of mens Natures, banishes a
Rude, Churlish, and *Pharisaical* Temper,
and infuses a more calm and treatable
Disposition. It commands us to *live and
love as brethren, to love without Hypocri-
sie, to have fervent Charity amongst our
selves, and to be kindly affectionated one
towards another.* It lays the summ of our
Duty towards others in this, *to love our
neigh-*

Part 3. *neighbour as our selves.* This our Saviour seems to own as his proper and peculiar Law, and has ratified it with his own solemn Sanction, *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another :* and then makes this the great visible badge of all those who are truly Christians ; *By this shall all men know that you are my Disciples, if you have love one to another.*

And so indeed it was in those first and best Ages of Religion ; for no sooner did the Gospel fly abroad into the World, but the Love and Charity of Christians became Notorious, even to a Proverb, the Heathens taking notice of the Christians of those times with this particular Remark, *see how these Christians Love one another !* They were then united in the most happy *Fraternity* (a word much used by *Christians* in those days, and objected against them by the *Heathens*) they liv'd as *Brethren*, and accounted themselves such, not only as being sprung from one common Parent, (for in this respect that they had Nature for their common mother, they acknowledged the very *Heathens* to be *brethren*, though otherwise

Tert. Ap.
c. 39. p. 31.

Id. ib. M.
Fœl. p. 26.

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wife little deserving the name of Men) Part 3.
but upon much higher accounts, viz.
that they had one and the same God
for their *Father*, drank all of the same
Spirit of Holiness, were brought out of
the same *womb* of Darkness and Igno-
rance into the same light of Truth, that
they were partakers of the same Faith,
and Co-heirs of the same Hope. This
Lucian himself confesses of them, and
that it was one of the great Principles
that their Master instilled into them
that they should all become *Brethren*,
after once they had thrown off the Ré-
ligion of the *Gentiles*, and had embrac-
ed the Worship of their great *crucified*
Master, and given up themselves to live
according to his Laws. The truth is,
so ready, intire, and constant was their
Kindness and Familiarity, that the Hea-
thens accused them for having pri-
vy Marks upon their Bodies, whereby
they fell in love with each other at first
sight. Indeed they never met but they
embraced one another with all the de-
monstrations of a hearty and sincere Af-
fection, saluting each other with an
holy kiss, not only in their own Houses,
but at their Religious Assemblies, as a
Badge and Bond of that Christian Fel-
lowship

*De mort.
Peregrin. p.
764. tom. 2.*

*M. Fal. id.
& p. 7.*

Part 3. lowship and Communion that was maintained amongst them.

But the love and kindness of those *Christians* of old, did not lie only in a smooth Complemental Carriage, or in a parcel of good words, *depart in peace, be you warm'd or fill'd*; but in the real Exercises of Charity and Mercy. Now because the two great objects of *Charity* are the good of Mens *Souls*, and their outward and bodily Welfare and Happiness, we shall find, that the Primitive Christians were highly eminent and exemplary for both these. The Soul being of a much higher and nobler nature, and consequently infinitely more precious and valuable than the Body, they were accordingly infinitely careful and solicitous to save mens *Souls*, *to recover them out of the snare of the Devil*, and the Paths of Ruine, by making them *Christians*, and bringing them over to the *knowledge of the truth*; for this they prayed daily and earnestly. We Christians (says *Cyprian* to the *Pro-consul*) serve the one and true God that made Heaven and Earth, and pray to him night and day, not only for our selves, but for all men, and for the Safety of the Emperors themselves. From
this

*Passio Cyp.
vit. ejus
annex. p. 17.*

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this no Injuries nor Unkindnesses could Part 3.
discourage them. *Justin Martyr* tells Dial. cum
Tryph. p.
254. the *Jews*, that they prayed for them, and
all others that were unjustly their Ene-
mies, that repenting of their Wicked-
nesses, and ceasing to *blaspheme Christ*
Jesus, who by the Greatness of his
Works, the Uncontrolableness of the
Miracles performed in his Name, the Ex-
cellencie of his Doctrines, and the Clear-
ness of the Prophecies fulfilled in him,
appeared to be altogether innocent and
unblameable, and that rather believing
in him, they might together with *Chri-*
stians be saved by him at his second
glorious Coming, and not be condemn-
ed by him to Everlasting Flames. Id. p. 323 We
pray for you (says he) that *Christ* would
have mercy upon you ; for he has taught
us to *pray for our enemies*, to love them,
and be *merciful* to them. And after-
wards, when he had reckoned up all
those wicked and malicious Artifices
which the *Jews* had used both against
Christ and *Christians*, yet notwithstand-
ing all this (says he) we are so far from Id. p. 333
hating either you, or those who at your
suggestion believe these things of us,
that we *pray* that all of you may repent,
and obtain mercy from God, the gra-

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Part 3. cious and compassionate Parent of the World. The *Gnosticks* were the greatest scandal that ever was to *Christianity*, and the occasion of many of those Persecutions, and most of those horrible Calumnies which the Heathens brought upon the Christians, and yet see how *Irenæus* treats them; We pray for them *Adv. Her.* (says he) and beg of them not to continue in the Pit which they have digged to themselves, but to depart from their sottish and idle Vanities, to turn to the Church of God, that *Christ* may be formed in them, and that they may know the only true God, the Creator of the World. This we beg of them, loving them to better purpose than they think they love themselves: For our Love is true and wholesom, (if they will receive it) like a sharp Plaster indeed, but it will eat away the proud flesh, take down the swelling and vanity of their Minds; for which cause we will not cease by all means to apply it to them. The same *Origen* tells *Celsus*, that though both *Jews* and *Gentiles* turn'd their backs upon the Doctrine of *Christ*, and charged them for being *impostors* and deceivers, yet they would not give over thus *honestly* to de-

Adv. Her.

l. 3. c. 46.

p. 314.

Lib. 2.

p. 110.

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deceive men, to make them of Loose Part 3.
persons to become Sober and Temperate, or to bring them on towards it ; of dishonest to make them righteous, of Unwise to make them Prudent, at least to bring them into the way to these things ; of fearful and timorous to render them hearty and courageous, especially as oft as they are to contend for their Religion and Piety towards God. How earnestly and passionately does *Cyprian* beg of the Proconsul *Demetrian* Ad Demit. p. 204. and the *Gentiles* to provide for their Happiness and Safety, to accept of the Councils and Assistance which the *Christians* offered, who loved them not the worse for all the Torments and Sufferings they laid upon them ; that they returned kindness for hatred, and by the Miseries they endured, shewed to them the way to Heaven ; that now was the time to make their peace with God, and to secure Salvation ; that there was *no place for repentance* on t'other side the Grave, the *stations* of the other World being fix'd and unchangeable ; that therefore they should believe and live so, that they might eternally rejoyce with them, whom they did now so afflict and persecute.

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Part 3. In pursuance of this Design they spared neither *Pains* nor *Cost*, that they might instruct men in the way to Heaven. 'Tis said of *Pamphilus* the *Martyr*, that amongst other instances of his Charity, he used freely and readily to bestow *Bibles* upon all that were willing to read; for which purpose he had always great Numbers of those Holy Volumes by him, that as occasion serv'd he might distribute and bestow them. By these means mercifully furnishing those with these Divine Treasures, whose Purses could not otherwise reach to the price of the Scriptures, far dearer in those days than they are since *Printing* came into the World. We find *S. Chrysostom* so zealous for converting the *Gentiles* to *Christianity*, that for this very end he maintained many *Presbyters* and *Monks* in *Phœnicia*, partly at his own Charge, and partly by the assistance of Pious and well-disposed persons, whose only work it was to *catechise* and instruct the *Heathens* in the Principles of the *Christian* Faith; and that the business might succeed more effectually, he procur'd a Law from the Emperor *Arcadius*, (yet extant in the *Theodosian Code*) directed to

En-

*Hier. adv.
Ruffin. tom.
2. p. 199.
& Euseb.*

*Theod. Hist.
Ecccl. l. 5. c.
29. p. 229.*

*Lib. 16. tit.
10. de Pag.
Sacrif. &
Tem. l. 17.*

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Eutychian, Prefect of the East, that the Part 3.

Pagan Temples should be orderly taken down, that so they being destroyed, the whole matter of the *Gentile* Superstition might be abolished. Upon the executing of which Law great Mutinies were raised by the Country People, many of the *Monks* wounded, and some slain, and the rest wholly disheartened to proceed in the business, (these doubtless being *those* very *Monks* against whom *Libanius* so severely declaims for so mercilessly destroying the Pagan Temples.) Whereupon *Chrysostom*

*Orat. de
Templ. p. 10.
Ep. 123.
to. 4. p. 756.*

(who was then in Banishment) writes to them to bear up with a Christian and invincible Patience, encourages them resolutely to go on in so good a work; tells them, that God would not be wanting to stand by them, and to reward them in this and the other Life, and promises them (though his *Incomes* at this time were very small) that their former Pensions should be paid them, and all things necessary provided for them. And indeed with how much care and solicitude the good man's mind was filled about this business, he sufficiently intimates in a Letter written to another person whom he had im-

*Ad Rufin.
Presbyt. ep.
126. p. 763*

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Part 3. ployed about this Affair. Nor did they in those times regard *ease* or *safety* any more than they did *Cost* and *Charges* in this matter, exposing themselves to any dangers that they might do good to the Souls of Men.

I might easily shew, that this Consideration had a great Influence upon the Sufferings of the Primitive Martyrs, willingly running any Hazards, cheerfully enduring any Miseries that they might gain others to the Faith, and prevent their Eternal Ruine. But that famous Story of S. John the Apostle shall serve instead of many, the *summ* of which is this: Coming to a place near *Ephesus*, in his Visitation of the Churches, he espied a *Youth* of a comely shape and pregnant parts, and taking hold of him, delivered him to the *Bishop* of the place with this Charge, (which he repeated once and again) *I commend this person to thee, to be looked to with all care and diligence, and that in the presence of Christ and the Church.* The Bishop undertook the Charge, received the Young man into his House, instructed him, and at last *baptized* him. Which being done, he thought he might remit a little of the Strictness of his Care; but

Eus. Hist.
Ecc. l. 3.
c. 23. p. 92.

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but the young man making an ill use of Part 3.
his Liberty, fell into bad Company, by
whose Arts and Snares he was seduced
into ways of Riot and Wickedness; till
despairing of all hope of Pardon from
God, he let loose the reins to all man-
ner of Exorbitancy, and agreeing with
his Confederates, they combin'd them-
selves into a Society of Highway-men,
and made him their *Captain*, who quick-
ly became as far beyond the rest in
Fierceness and Cruelty, as he was in
Power and Authority. St. *John* upon
occasion returning some while after to
the same place, after he had dispatched
his other business, required from the Bi-
shop the *pledge* he had left with him:
who wondring, and not knowing what
he meant; *I mean* (said S. *John*) *the*
Young man, 'tis the Soul of my Brother
that I require. The old man with a de-
jected look, and tears in his eyes, an-
swered, *He's dead*: And being de-
manded by what kind of Death; an-
swered, *He's dead to God*; for, alas, he's
become a *Villain*, and instead of the
Church, is fled with his Companions to
the Mountains to be a Thief and a Rob-
ber. The Apostle renting his Cloaths,
and bewailing that he had so ill be-
trusted

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Part 3. trusted his Brothers Soul, immediately call'd for a Horse and a Guide, and made haste to the Mountains; where being taken by those that stood *Sentinel*, he begg'd to be brought before their *Captain*, who stood ready arm'd some way off; but as soon as he perceiv'd 'twas *S. John* that was coming towards him, he began to be ashamed, and to run as fast as he could. The Apostle not regarding his own Age and Weakness, followed after with all his might; and when his Legs could not overtake him, he sent these passionate Exclamations after him; *Why, O my Son, dost thou fly from thy aged and unarmed Father? Take pity of me, and fear not, there is yet hope of Salvation for thee. I will undertake with Christ for thee; if need be I will freely undergo death for thee, as our Lord did for us, and lay down my own Life to ransom thine; only stay and believe me, for I am sent by Christ.* With that he staid, and with a dejected look, throwing away his Arms, he trembled, and dissolved into Tears; he embraced the Aged Apostle with all possible Expressions of Sorrow and Lamentation, as if again baptized with his own Tears. *S. John* assured him he had obtained his par-

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pardon of *Christ*, and having fasted and Part 3.
prayed with him and for him, and with
all the arts of Consolation, refreshed his
shatter'd and disconsolate *mind*, brought
him into, and restored him to the
Church.

This Story, though somewhat long, I
was the willinger to produce, both be-
cause so remarkable in it self, and so
great a Testimony of that mighty *ten-*
derness and compassion which they had
for the Souls of men ; for whose sake
they thought they could never *do*, ne-
ver venture far enough. *St. Augustine* Confess. l. 9.
c. 9. p. 155.
tom. 1.
tells us what infinite pains his Mother
Monica took about the Conversion of
her Husband *Patricius*, how unwearied-
ly she sought to endear her self to him,
by all the arts of a meek, prudent, and
Sober Carriage ; how submissively she
complied with his rigorous and unto-
ward Humors, how diligently she
watched the aptest times of Insinuat-
ion, never leaving, till at last she gained
him over to the Faith. Nor was her
Care and Solitude less for her Son
Augustine, who being hurried away
with the Lewdnesses of Youth, and in-
tangled with the Impieties of the *Ma-*
nichean Heresie, was the hourly Sub-
ject

Part 3. **ject** of her Prayers and Tears. She plied him with daily Counsels and Intreaties, implored the help and assistances of Good men, and importuned Heaven for the Success of all; not being able to gain any quiet to her mind, till *S. Ambrose* (with whom she had oft advised about it) sent her away with this assurance, *that it was not possible that a Child of so many tears should perish.* No sooner was his Conversion wrought, but her Spirit was at ease, and she now desired no more. Himself tells us, that discoursing with her alone some few days before her Death, concerning the State of the Blessed, and the Joys of Heaven, she at last broke off with this Farewel; *For my part, Son, I have now no further hopes or pleasures in this world; there was but one thing for which I desired to live, that I might see thee a Catholick Christian before I died; this my good God has abundantly blessed me with, having let me see thee despising the Felicities of this Life, and entred into his Family and Service; so that what do I make any longer here?* Nay, so great a Zeal had they for the good of Souls in those days, that many did not stick to engage themselves in *Temporal Slavery* for no other

Is. c. 10.

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other end but to deliver others from **Part 3.**
Spiritual Bondage. Thus *Serapian*, cal- Pallad.
Hist. Laus.
c. 83. in
vit. Serap.
p. 182.
 led *Sindonites*, (because he never wore
 more than one poor Linnen Garment)
 one of the Primitive *Asceticks*, sold him-
 self to a *Gentile Player*, that serv'd the
 Theatre; with whom he liv'd and un-
 derwent the meanest Offices, till he had
 converted him, his Wife, and whole Fa-
 mily to Christianity, who upon their
 Baptism restored him to his Liberty;
 whereupon he freely returned them
 back the *money* which he had receiv'd as
 the price of his servitude; which by mu-
 tual consent was given to the Poor.
 Coming afterwards to *Lacedæmon*, and
 hearing that a principal person of the
 City, a very good man otherwise, was
 infected with the *Manichean* Heresie;
 one of the first things he did, was to in-
 sinuate himself into his Family, selling
 himself to be his Slave; in which condi-
 tion he remained for two years toge-
 ther, till he had brought his Master and
 his whole Family off from that pernicious
 Heresie, and restored them to the
 Church; who did not only bless God
 for it, but treated him not as a *Servant*,
 but with that kindness and reverence
 that is due to a *Brother*, and a *Father*.

This

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Part 3. This was the good spirit and *genius* of those days, they intirely studied and designed the Happiness of Men, were willing and desirous freely to impart the Treasuries of the Gospel, and wished that in that respect all Mankind were as rich and happy as themselves. So far were they from that malicious Imputation which *Celsus* fastned upon them, that if all men would become Christians they would not admit it:

Orig. contr.
Cels. l. 3.
p. 116.

To which *Origen* flatly returns the *Lie*; and tells him, the Falseness of it might appear from this, that Christians (as much as in them lay) were not backward to propagate their Doctrine through the whole world; and that some of them had peculiarly undertaken to go up and down, not only in Cities, but in Towns and Villages, to bring over others to the true Religion. And that they did not this out of any designs of *gain* or interest to themselves was plain, because they often refus'd to receive *necessary* Accommodations from others; or if they did, they were such only as were barely and absolutely necessary for the present turn, when as far greater Liberalities have been offered to them. Nay, some

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some of the ancient *Canons* expressly re- Part 3.
quire, that no man, who has either *He-* Conc. Carth.
reticks or *Infidels* in his Family, shall be 3 Can. 18.
admitted to the Order either of *Bishop*,
Presbyter or *Deacon*, who has not first
converted those persons to the true
Christian Faith.

Having seen what Kindness and Cha-
rity they expressed to mens *Souls*, we
come next to that which respected
their *Bodies*, and the Necessities of the
outward Life; this they shewed in se-
veral Instances; we shall consider some
of the most material. In the first place
they took special care to provide for
the *Poor*, and such as were unable to
help themselves: This *Cyprian* in his Ep. 5. 2. 13.
Retirement, gave especially in charge
to the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* of his
Church, that by all means they should
mind the *Poor*, and furnish them with
whatever was necessary for them. *Dio-*
nysius Bishop of *Corinth*, testifies of the *Enf. Hist.*
Church of *Rome*, that they did not on- *Ecc. l. 4. 23. p. 14.*
ly eminently provide for their own
Poor, but with great Liberality admi-
nister to the Necessities of other Chur-
ches, plentifully relieving whatever
Indigent Brethren came to them, or
where ever they were, though at the
great-

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Part 3. greatest distance from them. And of the

Hom. 67. in

Matth.

p. 586.

Vit. ejus

per Paul.

Diac. p. 11,

12.

Basil. ad

Sophron. ep.

84. p. 156.

tom. 3.

Orat. 19.

p. 298.

Church of *Antioch Chrysostom* tells us, that in his time, though the Revenues of it were but small, yet besides its Clergy, besides *Strangers, Lepers*, and such as were in *Bonds*, it daily maintained above *three thousand Widows and Maids*. Indeed the Bounty of those Times was almost incredible. *S. Cyprian* upon his turning Christian sold his Estate to relieve the Wants of others, and could not be restrained from it either by the Perswasions of others, or the Considerations of what he might be reduced to himself. After his entrance upon the Ministry, his Doors were open to all that came; from whom no Widow ever returned empty: To any that were blind he would be their Guide to direct them; them that were lame, he was ready to lend his Assistance to support them; none were oppressed by might, but he was ready to defend them. *Cæsarius*, *S. Basil's* Brother, made only this short Will when he died, *I will that all my Estate be given to the Poor*. *Nazianzen* reports of his Father, that he was so kind to the Poor, that he did not only bestow the *surplusage* of his Estate upon them, but even part

of

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of what was reserv'd for *necessary* uses; Part 3.
of his Mother, that one Ocean of wealth *Ibid. p.*
would not have filled her unsatisfied *299.*
desire of doing good, and that he had
often heard her say, that if it were
lawful she could willingly have sold
her *self* and *children*, to have expend-
ed the price upon the uses of the poor;
and of his Sister *Gorgonia*, that she was
immensely liberal, *Job-like*, her Gate
was open to every Stranger, she was
eyes to the *blind*, feet to the *lame*, and
a *Mother* to *Orphans*; her Estate was as
common to the poor, and as much at
their need, as every ones is to himself,
dispersing and scattering abroad, and
according to the Counsel of our *Savi-*
our, laying up her treasure in heaven.

They gave not only according to,
but beyond their Ability; trusting to
the goodness and fidelity of Heaven to
supply what *wanted*, which many times
made the Return with Overplus by
ways uncommon and extraordinary.
Sozomen relates of *Epiphanius* Bishop *H. Eccl.*
of *Salamine* in *Cyprus*, that having *lib. 7. c. 27.*
spent all his own Estate in pious and *p. 749.*
charitable uses, in relieving the needy,
and such as were by shipwrack and the
mercy of the Sea cast upon the Coast,

R he

Part 3. he freely dispensed and distributed the Goods and Treasures of his Church (which by the Bounty of charitable persons from all parts, who thought they could not better lodge their Estates than in the Hands of so good a man, was very rich and wealthy) and that with so liberal a Hand, that the *Steward* or Guardian of the Church finding its stock begin to grow very low, with some resentment told him of it, charging him as too profuse and open-handed: All which notwithstanding he remitted nothing of his accustomed bounty to the Poor. At length all being spent, a *stranger* on a suddain comes into the Stewards lodgings, and delivers into his hands a great *purse* of *Gold*, without any discovery either who 'twas that *brought* it, or who 'twas that *sent* it. And indeed so vast and universal was the Charity of this good man, that it sometimes made him liable to be *imposed* upon by crafty and designing persons, whereof the *Historian* in the same place gives this remarkable Instance. A couple of *Beggars* meeting *Epiphanius*, and knowing the Charitableness of his Temper, to draw the greater Alms from him, agreed

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greed to put this trick upon him. One of Part 3. them lies along upon the ground, feigning himself to be dead, the other standing by him, passionately bewailed the death of his companion, and his own poverty, not able to give him burial. *Epiphanius* pitied the Man, perswaded him to bear his loss patiently, and not to expect that his Companion should in this world rise any more, bid him take care for his Burial, and withal gave him what was sufficient for it. No sooner was he gone out of sight, but the Beggar comes to his Companion, jogs him with his foot, and commends him for so ingeniously acting the cheat: *Rise* (said he) *and with what we have got let's be merry and jolly to day.* But alas! the *Comedy* was turn'd into a *tragic Scene*; the man was really dead, and could not be recovered by all his cries or stirring; which his Companion no sooner perceived, but with all haste makes after the *Bishop*, cries and tears his hair, confesses the cheat, and begs that his companion might be restored to life; but all in vain: the Bishop bids him be content, and tells him, that God would not undo what he had done.

Leaving a fair warning to men (says the
R 2 *Historian*)

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Part 3. Historian that the great God who sees and hears all things, reckons those mockeries that are put upon his Servants, as if done to himself. But this only upon occasion of that great Charity which they then upon all occasions extended to the Poor. The truth is, they then looked upon the poor as the *treasure* and *ornament* of the Church, by whom as by Bills of Exchange they returned their Estates into the other World. When

Aët. Laurent. apud Sur. ad diem 10. Aug. Tom. 4. vid. Ambros. Offic. lib. 2. c. 28. Tom. 1.

Decius the *Emperor* demanded of *Laurentius* the *Deacon* of the Church of *Rome*, the Churches Treasures, he promised after three days to produce them; in which time, having gathered together the *blind* and the *lame*, the *infirm* and the *maim*, at the time appointed he brought them into the Palace, and when the *Emperor* asked for the *Treasures* he had promised to bring with him, he shews him his Company, Behold (said he) *these are the Treasures of the Church, those Eternal Treasures, which are never diminished, but increase; which are dispersed to every one, and yet found in all.* This passage brings to my mind (though it more properly belongs to the next instance of *Charity*) what *Palladius* relates of *Macarius*, a *Presbyter*

Hist. Lauf. c. 6. p. 22.

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Presbyter and Governor of the *Hospital* at *Alexandria*; There was a Virgin in that City very rich, but infinitely covetous and uncharitable: She had been oft attempted and set upon by the persuasions of good men, but in vain: at last he caught her by this piece of pious policy. He comes to her, and tells her, that a parcel of Jewels, *Emeraulds* and *Jacinths*, of inestimable Value, were lodg'd at his House, but which the owner was willing to part with for five hundred pieces of money, and advises her to buy them: She catching at the offer, as hoping to gain considerably by the bargain, delivered him the money, and intreated him to buy them for her, knowing him to be a person of great piety and integrity. But hearing nothing from him a long time after, till meeting him in the Church, she asked him what were become of the *Jewels*? He told her he had laid out the money upon them (for he had expended it upon the uses of the *Hospital*) (and desired her to come and see them; and if the purchase did not please her, she might refuse it. She readily came along with him to the *Hospital*, in the Upper Rooms whereof

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Part 3. the *Women* were lodged ; in the lower the *Men*. He asked her which she would see first, the *Jacincts*, or the *Em-raulds* ; which she leaving to him, he brought her first into the upper part where the *Lame*, *Blind*, and *Cripple-women* were disposed ; and *see*, said he, the *Jacincts* that I spoke of, : Then carrying her down into the lower rooms, he shewed her the *Men* in the like condition, and told her, *These are the Em-raulds that I promised, and Jewels more precious than these, I think, are not to be found ; and now*, said he, *if you like not your bargain, take your money back again.* The woman blushed and was troubled to think she should be hal'd to that, which she ought to have done freely for the Love of God. Afterwards she heartily thanked *Macarius*, and betook her self to a more charitable and Christian course of Life.

Next to this, their charity appeared in *visiting* and assisting of the *Sick* ; contributing to their necessities, refreshing their tired bodies, curing their wounds or sores with their own hands. The *Sick* (saith the ancient Author of the Epistle in *Justin Martyr*, if it be not *Justin* himself) are not to be neglected ;

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lected; nor is it enough for any to say, Part 3.
 I have never learnt to serve and give
 Attendance: For he that shall make
 his Delicacy or Tenderneſs unaccuſtom-
 ed to any hardneſs to be an excuſe in
 this caſe, let him know it may ſoon be
 his own; and then he'll quickly diſ-
 cern the unreaſonableneſs of his own
 judgment when the ſame ſhall happen
 to him, that he himſelf has done to o-
 thers. But there were no ſuch nice
 and ſqueamiſh Stomachs in the good
Chriſtians of thoſe times *S. Hierom*
 tells us of *Fabiola*, a Roman Lady, a
 Woman of conſiderable birth and for-
 tunes, that ſhe ſold her Eſtate, and de-
 dicated the Money to the uſes of the
 poor; ſhe built an Hoſpital (and was
 the *firſt* that did ſo) wherein ſhe main-
 tained and cured the infirm and miſe-
 rable, or any ſick that ſhe met withal
 in the Streets; here was a whole *ren-
 dezvous* of Cripples, hundreds of Diſ-
 eaſes and Diſtempers here met toge-
 ther, and her ſelf at hand to attend
 them; ſometimes carrying the diſeaſed
 in her Arms, or bearing them on her
 Shoulders; ſometimes waſhing and dref-
 ſing thoſe filthy and noyſome Sores,
 from which another would have turn-

*Epitaph.
 Fabiolæ ad
 Ocean. p.
 199. tom.
 I.*

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Part 3. ed his Eyes with Contempt and Horror ; otherwhile preparing them food, or give them Physick with her own Hand. The like we read of *Placilla* the *Empress*, wife to the younger *Theodosius*, that she was wont to take all possible care for the lame or wounded, to go home to their Houses, carry them all necessary conveniencies, and to attend, and assist them not by the ministry of her Servants and Followers, but with her own Hands. She constantly visited the common *Hospitals*, attended at sick Beds for their cure and recovery, tasted their Broths, prepared their Bread, reached them their Provisions, washed their Cups with her own Hands, and underwent all other Offices which the very meanest of the servants were to undergo. Thus also the *Historian* reports of *Deogratias* the aged Bishop of *Carthage*, under the *Vandalick* Persecution, that having sold all the Plate belonging to the Church, to ransom the Captive *Christians*, and wanting places conveniently to bestow them, he lodged them in two large Churches, provided for the needy, took care of the sick, himself every hour visiting them both by day and night, with Physicians

*Theodor. H.
Eccl. lib. 5.
c. 18.
p. 160.*

*Vit. vitic.
de persec.
Vandal.
lib. 1. fol. 5.
p. 2.*

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ans attending him to superintend their Part 3.
cure, and diet suitable to their several
cases, going from Bed to Bed to know
what every one stood in need of. Nay,
how often did they venture to relieve
their Brethren, when labouring under
such Distempers as seemed immediately
to breath *death* in their faces? Thus in
that sad and terrible Plague at *Alex-*
andria, which though it principally Euseb. H.
Eccl. lib. 7.
c. 22.
p. 269. rag'd amongst the *Gentiles*, yet seiz'd
also upon the *Christians*, Many of
the Brethren (says the *Historian*) out
of the *excessive* Abundance of their
kindness and *charity*, without any re-
gard to their own health and life, bold-
ly ventured into the thickest dangers,
daily visiting, attending, instructing,
and comforting their sick and infected
Brethren, till themselves expired and
died with them: Nay, many of them
whom they thus attended recovered
and lived while they who had looked
to them died themselves; as if by a
strange and prodigious *Charity* they
had willingly taken their diseases up-
on them, and died themselves to save
them from death. Thus 'twas with
the *Christians*, while the *Gentiles* in the
mean time put off all sence of huma-
nity,

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Part 3. nity; when any began to fall sick amongst them, they presently cast them out, shun'd their dearest Friends and Relations, left them half-dead in the high-ways, and took no care of them either alive or dead.

And that this work of charity might be the better managed amongst *Christians*, they had in many places (and particularly in this of *Alexandria*) certain persons, whose proper office it was to attend and administer to the Sick: They were called *Parabolani*, (because especially in pestilential and infectious Distempers they did *παροβόλλεσθαι*, cast themselves into an immediate hazard of their lives) and were peculiarly deputed *ad curanda debiliū agra corpora*, (as the Law of the younger *Theodosius* expresses it) to attend and cure the bodies of the infirm and sick. Their numbers it seems were very great, insomuch that upon any tumultuary occasions they became formidable even to the Courts of Civil Judicature; upon complaint whereof made to the Emperour, *Theodosius* reduced their number to five hundred; which being found too little, by a second *Constitution*, he enlarged it to six hundred. The truth is, these

*Cod. Theod.
lib. 16. tit.
2. de Episcopis, &c.
§. 42, 43.*

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these *Parabolani* were a kind of Clergy- Part 3.
Physicians ; for that they were under an
Ecclesiastical cognizance is plain, being
reckoned up with the *Clergy*, and ac-
cordingly by the latter Constitution of
Theodosius, are appointed to be chosen
by, and to be immediately subject to
the *Bishop* of the place.

A third instance of their Love and
Charity, (and which *S. Ambrose* calls
the *highest* piece of liberality) was their
care of those that were in *Captivity*, Offic. lib. 2.
c. 15. p. 42.
groaning under the merciless Tyranny
and Oppression of their Enemies, to
relieve them under, and redeem them out
of their Bondage and Slavery. *Cyprian*
in a Letter to the Bishops of *Numidia*,
about this very thing, the redemption of
those *Christians* amongst them that had
been taken Captive by the *Barbarians*,
elegantly bewails their misery, and ear-
nestly presses their redemption, and as a
help towards it, sent them *Sestertium* Rigalt. in
loc.
centum millia nummum ; which *Rigal-*
tius computes to twenty five thousand
pounds *French*, though others more
truly reduce it to a much lower Sum, Gronov. de
pecun. vet.
lib. 2. c. 2.
p. 131.
viz. seven thousand five hundred, or
two thousand five hundred Crowns ;
which he and his People had liberally
con-

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Part 3. contributed to it. Of *Acacius* Bishop
H. Eccl. lib. of *Amida*, we read in *Socrates*, that
 7. c. 21.
 p. 360. when the *Roman* Army had taken seven
 thousand *Persians* Captive, and would
 neither release them without a ransom,
 nor yet give them Food to keep them
 alive; this good Bishop, with the con-
 sent of the Clergy of his Church, caused
 all the Gold and Silver *Plate* and vessels
 that belonged to their Church to be
 melted down; ransom'd the Wretches,
 fed them, and then freely sent them
 home to their own Prince: with which
generous Charity the King of *Persia* (as
 he well might) was strangely amaz'd,
 finding that the *Romans* knew how to
 conquer an Enemy by *Kindness*, no less
 than by force of *Arms*. The like *S. Am-*
brose relates of himself, that he caused
 the *Communion Plate* of his Church to
 be broke in pieces to redeem Christians
 taken captive by the Enemy; for which
 though he was blam'd by the *Arrian*
 party, yet he elegantly defends the fact,
 as not only a justifiable, but a proper
 and eminent act of Charity. And in-
 deed 'tis the only case wherein the *Im-*
perial Constitutions make it lawful to
 sell or pawn the Plate and Gifts belong-
 ing to the Church, it being otherwise
 made

Ibid. c. 28.
 p. 50.

Phot. No-
tacon.
 ΤΙΤ. Ε. ΠΕΡ.
 ΕΚΚΛΗΣ.
 ΚΑΙ ΟΙΚΟΥ
 ΩΝ, &C.
 ΚΕΡ. Β.
 P. 43.

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made *Sacrilege* to receive them, and Part 3. the things absolutely forfeited by those that bought them. This was very great, but yet we meet with a *stranger* Charity than this in the Primitive Church, some that have parted with their own liberty to purchase Freedom unto others; So S. *Clemens* assures us in his famous Epistle to the *Corinthians*, we have known many amongst our selves (says he) who have delivered themselves into Bonds and Slavery that they might restore others to their Liberty; many who have hir'd out themselves Servants unto others, that by their Wages they might feed and sustain them that wanted. Of which this one strange instance shall suffice. Under the *Vandalic* Persecution many Christians were carried Slaves out of *Italy* into *Africk*, for whose redemption *Paulinus* then Bishop of *Nola* had expended his whole estate; at last a widow comes to him, intreats him to give her as much as would ransom her only Son, then Slave to the King of the *Vandals* Son-in-Law: He told her he had not one penny left, nothing but his own person, and that he would freely give her to make her best of, and to procure her son's ransom; this the woman

Pag. 70.

Greg. Mag.
dial. lib. 3.
c. 1. p. 98.
Edit. col.
1610.

Part 3. man look'd upon from a person of his quality, as rather a *deriding* her calamity, than a *pitying* of her case: but he assur'd her he was in earnest, and at last induced her to believe him; whereupon they both took shipping for *Africk*, whither they were no sooner come, but the good Bishop address'd himself to the Prince, begg'd the release of the widows Son, and offer'd himself in his room. The Issue was, the woman had her Son restor'd her, and *Paulinus* became the Princes Slave, who employ'd him in the dressing and keeping of his Garden. How he afterwards ingratiated himself into the favour of his Master, and came to be discovered to him who he was, how the Prince set him at liberty, and gave him leave to ask what he would, which he made no further use of than to beg the release of all his Country-men then in Bondage, which was accordingly granted, and all joyfully sent home with their Ships laden with Corn and Provisions, I omit as not pertinent to my purpose; they that are desirous to know more of it may read it in the Dialogues of *S. Gregory*, from whence I have borrowed the Story. This certainly was Charity with
a wit-

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a witness, an act that will find more to Part 3. admire and commend it, than to imitate and follow it.

A fourth instance of Primitive Charity, was the great care they took about the *bodies* of the *dead*, in giving them *decent* and where they could, *honourable* Burial; all men naturally have a kindness for their Bodies, and therefore desire, that what has so long been the mansion of an *immortal* tenant, may upon its dislodging be orderly taken down, and the ruines of it laid up with honor and safety. Man's Body besides that 'tis the cabinet of an invaluable Jewel, is a curious piece of artifice, *fearfully and wonderfully made*, the excellent contrivance of the divine omniscience, and in that respect challenges not to be carelessly thrown aside, or rudely trampled in the dirt. This seems to be the common sence of mankind, it being the care and practise of almost all Nations in the world religiously to enshrine the remains of their deceased friends in Tombs and Sepulchres; thinking it but reasonable to testify so much kindness to their departed friends, as to honour their Memories, and to secure from rude barbarous violence

Part 3. lence what they left behind them when they put off mortality. Sure I am, this was eminently the Care of *Christians*, no dangers or threatnings could affright them from doing this last office to their deceased Brethren, especially such as had been *Martyrs* and *Champions* for the Truth. The *Roman* Clergy in an Epistle to them of *Carthage*, reckons it as one of the greatest instances of Charity, above that of relieving the poor, ministering to the Sick, or the rest which they there enumerate and reckon up; tells them that it could not be neglected without great danger, and that fidelity in this matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him. *Dionysius* Bishop of *Alexandria*, speaking of the Plague that raged there (which we mentioned but now) commends the *Christians* for assisting their sick dying Brethren, that they closed their Eyes, laid them out, washed their Bodies, dressed and adorned them up for Burial, and carried them out upon their own shoulders, which they chearfully did, notwithstanding the imminent danger that attended it, and that it was not long before others were called to do the same Offices for them.

Epist. 2. inter Ep. Cyp.
p. 9.

*Ibid. ubi
supr.*

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them. Their Bodies they decently Part 3.
committed to the ground, for they ab-
horred the custom so common amongst
the Gentiles of *burning* the bodies of
the dead; which they did, not (as the
Heathens objected) because they
thought that their bodies once burnt to
ashes would be difficultly brought to a
Resurrection (a Doctrine which they
strenuously asserted, and held fast as
the main *Pillar* of their comfort and
confidence) but because they looked
upon it as *inhumane* and *barbarous*, and
contrary to the more ancient and bet-
ter usage of Mankind in this matter.
Tertullian calls this way of Burial by *De Anim.*
inhumation a piece of piety, and tells *c. 51. p. 301*
us they abstained from burning the
Corps, not as some did, because they
thought that some part of the Soul re-
mained in the Body after death, but
because it favor'd of Savageness and
Cruelty. Therefore their Enemies, to
do them the greater spite, did not only
put them to death, but very often burn
their dead Bodies, and sprinkle their
Ashes into the Sea, partly to hinder
them from a decent Burial, and partly
(as in that tumult at *Alexandria* under
Julian) that nothing might be left of
S them

Min. Fac.
p. 9. 28.

De Anim.
c. 51. p. 301

Ann.
Marcelline
lib. 22.
p. 1627.

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Part 3. them to be honour'd as the remains of Martyrs. As Christianity got ground, this more civil way of Inhumation did not only take place, but rooted out the contrary custom even amongst the Gentiles themselves. For though the Emperor *Theodosius* the Great, gives some intimation of it, as remaining in his time, yet not long after, it wholly ceased, as is expressly acknowledged by *Macrobius*, who liv'd in the time of the younger *Theodosius*.

Cod. Theod.
l. 6. Tit. 17.
de Sep. viol.
Lib. 9.
Saturnal.
Lib. 7. c. 7.
pag. 514.

Apol. l. 42.
p. 34.

De vit.
Philos. in
vit. Adef.
p. 65.

Nor did they ordinarily content themselves with a bare Interment, but prepared the Body for its funeral with costly *Spices*, and rich Odors, and Perfumes, not sparing the best Drugs and Ointments which the *Sabeans* could afford, as *Tertullian* plainly testifies. They who while alive generally abstained from whatever was curious and costly, when dead were embalm'd and entombed with great art and curiosity. Whence *Eunapius* (much such a friend to Christianity as *Julian* or *Porphyrus*) derides the *Monks* and Christians of *Egypt* for honoring the season'd and embalm'd *Bones* and *Heads* of Martyrs, such (*says he*) as the Courts of Justice had condemned, and put to death for
their

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their innumerable Villanies. This Cost Part 3.
the Christians doubtless bestowed upon the Bodies of their Dead, because they looked upon Death as the Entrance into a better Life, and laid up the Body as the *Candidate* and Expectant of a joyful and happy Resurrection. Besides, hereby they gave some encouragement to Suffering, when men saw how much Care was taken to honor and secure the Reliques of their Mortality, and that their Bodies should not be persecuted *after* death.

This their Enemies knew very well, and therefore many times denied them the civility and humanity of Burial, to strike the greater Dread into them. Thus *Maximus* the President threatn'd *Tharacus* the Martyr, that although he bore up his head so high upon the confidence, that after his death his Body should be wound up and embalm'd with Ointments and odoriferous Spices, yet he would defeat his hopes by causing his Body to be burnt and sprinkling his ashes before the wind.

Thus after they had put *Polycarp* to death, they burnt his Body out of spite to the Christians who had begg'd it of the Proconsul, only to give it a solemn

Aët. SS.
Tharac.
Prob. &
Anatol.
apud Baron.
ad An.
299. tom. 2.

Fuseb. H.
Eccl. lib. 4.
c. 15. p. 135

Part 3. Interrment; whereupon gathering his Bones which the mercy of the Fire had spared, they decently committed them to the earth, and there used to meet to celebrate the memory of that pious and holy man.

During those times of Persecution they were very careful to bury the Bodies of the *Martyrs*, some making it their particular business by stealth to interr those in the night, who had suffered in the day; this they did with great hazard and danger, many of them (as appears from the ancient *Martyrologies*) suffering Martyrdom upon this very account. Afterwards, when the Church was settled, there was a particular Order of men call'd *Copiate*, (either ἀπὸ τῆς κοπιᾶδος, from the pains they took, or else ἀπὸ τῆς κοπιᾶσεως, because they committed the Bodies of the dead to the grave, the place of *ease* and *rest*) appointed for this purpose about the time of *Constantine*, or to be sure his Son *Constantius*, in two of whose Laws they are expressly mentioned, and in the latter said to be lately instituted. Their Office (as *Epiphanius* tells) was to wrap up and bury the Bodies of the dead, to prepare their Graves, and to inter-

Cod. Theod.
lib. 13. Tit.
1. de Lustr.
Concl. l. 1.
Lib. 16. Tit.
2. de Episc.
l. 15. ἀπὸ
κοπιᾶσεως
πρὸς τὴν
p. 465.

terr

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terr them : and because inhumation and Part 3.
giving burial to the dead was ever ac-
counted in a more peculiar manner,
a work of Piety and Religion; there-
fore these persons were reckon-
ed if not strictly *Clergy-men*, at least
in a Clergy-relation, being in both
Laws of *Constantius* enumerated with,
and invested in the same immunities
with the Clergy. By the Author in
St. *Hierom* they are styled *Fossarii*, De Sept.
Ordin. Ecc.
tom. 4. p. 81
grave-makers, and by him plac'd in the
first and lowest Order of the *Clerici*,
and exhorted to be like good old *To-
bit* in Faith, Holiness, Knowledge, and
Vertue. In the great Church of *Con-
stantinople* they were called *Decani*, or
Deans, (but quite distinct from the *Pa-
latine Deans* spoken of in the *Theodosian* Lib. 6. Tit.
de Decanis.
l. 1.
Code, and frequently elsewhere; who
were a military Order, and chiefly be-
longed to the *Emperor's Palace*) they
were one of the *Collegia*, or Corpora-
tions of the City. Their number was
very great; *Constantine* is said to have
appointed no less than MC. of them :
But by a Law of *Honorius* and *Theodo-
sius*, they were reduc'd to DCCCCL; Lib. 1. C.
tit. 2. de
SS. Eccles.
l. 4.
till afterwards *Anastasius* brought them
back to their former Number, which

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Part 3. was also ratified and confirmed by *Justinian*, their particular duties and Offices both as relating to the dead, and all other things are largely described in two *Novel* Constitutions of his to that purpose.

Novel. Justinian. 43. p. 114. & 59. p. 134.

Nor did they only take care that the Body might be prepared for its Funeral, but to provide it of a decent and convenient *Sepulchre*, wherein it might be honorably and securely laid up; a thing which had been always practised by the more sober and civiliz'd part of Mankind. Their Burying-places (called *Polyandria*, *Cryptæ*, *Arenaria*, but most commonly *Cæmeteria* or *Dormitories*, because according to the Notion which the Scriptures gives us of the death of the Righteous, *Christians* are not so properly said to *die* as to *sleep in the Lord*, and their bodies to *rest* in the grave in expectation of a joyful resurrection) were generally in the *fields* or *gardens*, it being prohibited by the *Roman* Laws and especially an ancient Law of the *XII. Tables*, to bury within the City Walls. This held for some Centuries after Christianity appeared in the World, and longer it was before they buried within Churches; within the

Apud Cicer. de leg. lib. 2. p. 288. vol. 4.

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the *out-parts* whereof to be interred, Part 3. was a privilege at first granted only to *Princes* and Persons of the greatest rank and quality. *Chrysostome* assures us, that *Constantius* the *Emperor* reckoned he did his Father *Constantine* the Great, a peculiar honor, when he obtained to have him buried in the *Porch* of the Church which he had built at *Constantinople* to the memory of the *Apostles*, and wherein he had earnestly desired to be buried, as *Eusebius* tells us; and in the same many of his Successors were interred; it not being in use, then, nor some hundreds of years after for persons to be buried in the *Body* of the Church, as appears from the *Capitula* of *Charles* the Great, where burying in the Church, which then it seems had crept into some places, is strictly forbidden.

*Hom. 26. in
Cap. 12.
2 ad Cor.
p. 929.*

*De vit.
Const. lib. 4.
c. 71. p. 562*

*Lib. 1. Cap.
159. fol.
27. p. 1.*

During the first ages of Christianity, while the malice of their Enemies persecuted them both *alive* and *dead*, their *Cæmeteria* were ordinarily *under ground*, imitating herein the custom of the *Jews*, whose Sepulchres were in *Caverns*, and holes of rocks, though doubtless the *Christians* did it to avoid the rage and fury of their enemies; not so

Part 3. much upon the account of *secrecy*; for their frequent retiring to those places was so notorious, as could not escape the observation of their Enemies, and therefore we sometimes find the *Emperor's* Officers readily coming thither; but it was upon the account of that *Sacredness* and Religion that was reckon'd to be due to places of this nature, it being accounted by all Nations a piece of great impiety, *Manes temerare Sepultos*, to disturb and violate the ashes of the dead. They were large *Vaults* dug in dry sandy places, and arched over, and separated into many little *Apartments*, wherein on either side the Bodies of the Martyrs lay in distinct Cells, each having an *Inscription* upon Marble, whereon his *Name, Quality*, and probably the time and *manner* of his death were engraven: Though in the heats of persecution they were forced to bury great numbers together in one common grave (LX. *Prudentius* tells us he observ'd) and then not the names, but only the number of the interred was written upon the Tomb. Indeed the multitudes of Martyrs that then suffered, required very large conveniences of interment. And so they had,
info-

Prudent.
Bevi. Steph.
P. ff. Hipp.
pol. Mart.
Hym. 11.
p. 129.

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insomuch, that the last Publisher of the Part 3. *Roma Subterranea* assures us, that Lib. 1. c. 2. num. 9. p. 4. though those *Cæmeteria* were under ground, yet were they many times double and sometimes treble, two or three stories one still under another.

By reason thereof they must needs be very dark, having no light from without, but what peep'd in from a few little cranies, which filled the place with a kind of sacred horror, as St. *Hierom* Comment. in c. 40. Ezekiel, tom. 5. p. 521. informs us, who while a youth, when he went to School at *Rome*, us'd upon the Lords day to visit these solemn places. Built they were by pious and charitable persons, (thence called after their names) for the interrment of Martyrs, and other uses of the Church; for in these places, Christians in times of persecution were wont to hide themselves, and to hold their Religious Assemblies, when banished from their publick Churches, as I have formerly noted. Of these about *Rome* only *Baronius* out of the Records in the *Vatican* Ad An. 226. tom. 2. reckons up XLIII, and others to the number of *threescore*. We may take an estimate of the rest by the account which *Baronius* gives of one, called the *Cemeterie* of *Priscilla*, discovered Ad an. 130. vid. ad an. 57. tom. 1. num. 112. in

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Part 3. in his time, *An.* 1578. in the *Via Salaria* about three miles from *Rome*, which he often viewed and searched: It is (*says he*) strange to report, the place by reason of its vastness and variety of apartments, appearing like a *City under ground*. At the entrance into it there was a principal way, or Street much larger than the rest, which on either hand opened into divers other ways, and those again divided into many lesser ways and turnings, like Lanes and Allies within one another. And as in Cities there are void open places for the *Markets*; so here there were some larger spaces for the holding (as occasion was) of their Religious Meetings, wherein were placed the *Effigies* and Representations of Martyrs, with places in the top to let in *light*, long since stopt up. The discovery of this place caused great wonder in *Rome*, being the most exact and perfect *Cæmeterie* that had been yet found out. Thus much I thought good to add upon occasion of that singular care, which Christians then took about the Bodies of their dead. If any desire to know more of these venerable Antiquities, they may consult *Onuphrius de Cæmeteriis*

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teris, and especially the *Latin Edition* Part 3.
of the *Roma Subterranea*, where their *Edit: à*
largest curiosity may be fully satisfied *Paul. A-*
in these things. *ringhis.*
Rom. 1651.
& Col.
1659.

Many other instances of their Charity might be mentioned, their ready entertaining Strangers, providing for those that laboured in the Mines, marrying poor Virgins, and the like, of which to treat particularly, would be too vast and tedious. To enable them to do these charitable Offices, they had not only the extraordinary contributions of particular persons, but a common stock and treasury of the Church. At the first going abroad of the Gospel into the world, so great was the Piety and Charity of the Christians, That the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul, neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common; neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were Possessors of Lands or Houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. But this community

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Part 3. munity of goods lasted not long in the
 1 Cor. 16. Church; we find St. Paul giving order
 1, 2. to the Churches of *Galatia* and *Corinth*
 for weekly Offerings for the Saints that
 upon the first day of the week (when
 they never fail'd to receive the Sacra-
 ment) they should every one of them lay
 by him in store according as God had pro-
 spered him. This custom *Justin Mar-*
 tyr assures us still continued in histime;
 for describing the manner of their As-
 semblies on the *Lords day*, he tells us,
 that those who were able and willing
 contributed what they saw good; and
 the collection was lodg'd in the hands
 of the *Bishop* or *President*, and by him
 distributed for the relief of Widows
 and Orphans, the sick or indigent, the
 imprison'd or strangers, or any that
 were in need. In the next Age they
 were reduced to Monthly Offerings, as
 appears from *Tertullian*, who gives us
 this account of them in his time, That
 at their religious Assemblies upon a
 monthly day, (or oftner if a man will,
 and be able) every one according to
 his ability laid by somewhat for chari-
 table uses, (they put it into a kind of
poor mans box call'd *Arca*, that stood in
 the Church) this they did freely, no
 man

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man being forced or compelled to it ; Part 3. leaving it behind them as a stock to maintain Piety and Religion ; for 'tis not spent (*says he*) upon feasts or drinking-bouts, or to gratifie Gluttony and Intemperance, but laid out in relieving the needy, burying the dead, providing for Orphans, supporting the aged, recruiting the spoiled, supplying the imprisoned, and those that were in Mines, Bonds, or Slavery for the profession of Christianity.

This was the fruit of Primitive Devotion. *Palladius* tells us of two Brothers, *Paesius* and *Esaias*, Sons of a wealthy Merchant, that their Father being dead, and they resolving upon a more strict and religious course of life, could not agree upon settling their Estates in the same way ; at last dividing their Estates, they disposed them thus : The one gave away his whole Estate at once, settling it upon *Monasteries*, *Churches*, and *Prisons*, for the relief of such as were in Bonds, and betaking himself to a Trade for a small maintenance for himself, gave himself up to Prayer, and the severer exercises of Religion. The other kept his Estate in his own possession, but built a *Monastery*,

*Histor.
Lausiac.
c.15. p.41.*

Part 3. *stery*, and taking a few Companions to dwell with him, entertain'd all *Strangers* that came that way, took care of the *sick*, entertain'd the *aged*, gave to those that needed, and every *Saturday* and *Lords day* caused two or three *tables* to be spread for the refreshment and entertainment of the *poor*; and in this excellent way spent his life.

Now that this account that we have given of the admirable Bounty and Charity of the ancient Christians is not *precarious*, and merely what the *Christians* tell us of themselves, we have the testimony of two open Enemies of Christianity, *Julian* and *Lucian*, both bitter Enemies to Christians, and the fiercer, because both, as 'tis supposed, Apostates from them; and their testimony is considerable upon a double account, partly because having lived amongst the Christians they exactly knew their ways and manners; and partly because being Enemies to them they would be sure to speak no more in their commendation than what was true. *Julian* speaking of the *Galileans*, tells us, that by their Charity to the poor they begot πολὺ τῆς ἀδελότητος θαύματος, the greatest admiration of their Religion

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Religion in the minds of Men. And Part 3.
in an Epistle to the *High-Priest* of *Galatia*, bewailing the desolate state of <sup>Epist. 49.
ad Arjac.
oper. par. 2.
p. 203.</sup> the *Heathen-world*, the ruine of their
Temples, and the great declension of
Paganism at that time, notwithstanding
all his endeavors to make it succeed
under the Influences of his Government;
he advises the *High-Priest* to promote
the *Gentile Interest*, by the same Method,
which the wicked Religion of the
Christians did thrive by, *i. e.* by their
bounty to *Strangers*, their care in
burying of the dead, and their holiness
of Life; and elsewhere, <sup>Fragm. E-
pist. par. 1.
p. 557.</sup> The poor (says he) having no care
taken of them, the wicked Galileans know
very well how to make their advantage
of it, for they give themselves up to
humanity and charity, and by these
plausible and insinulative ways
strengthen and encrease their wicked
and pernicious party; just as men
cheat little children with a Cake,
by two or three of which they tempt
them to go along with them, till having
got them from home, they clap them
under Hatches, transport and sell them,
and so for a little seeming pleasure
they are condemned to bitterness
all their Life; and no otherwise (says
he) 'tis with them, they

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Part 3. *they first inveigle honest minded men with what they call their feasts of Love, Banquets, Ministry and Attendance upon Tables, and then seduce them into their Wickedness and Impiety.* This as at once it shews his *venom* and malice according to the humor of the man, so it openly bears witness out of the mouth of an Enemy, to the most excellent and generous spirit of the Gospel. The other testimony is that of *Lucian*, (who if not a *Christian* himself, for *Suidas* his *δημουργός* ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ does no way intimate him to have been a *Christian* Preacher, notwithstanding what the generality of Writers have inferred thence; was yet however intimately acquainted with the Affairs of *Christians*) who bringing in his Philosopher *Peregrinus*, amongst other *Sects* joyning himself to the *Christians*, tells us what care they took of him, when cast into prison, they improved all their interest to have him released: But when this could not be granted, they officiously used all possible *service* and respect towards him; in the morning, Old Women, widows and children flock'd early to the Prison doors; and the better sort got leave of the Keepers to sleep with

In voc.
ἀντιανός.

De mort.
Peregrin.
p. 762,
763.
tom. 2.

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with him in the Prison all night ; then Part 3.
they had several sorts of *Banquets*, and
their *sacred discourses*. Nay, some were
sent in the name of the rest, even from
the Cities of *Asia* to assist and encourage
him ; who brought him great summs of
money, under pretence of his Imprison-
ment; it being incredible what readines
they shew, when any such matter is
once nois'd abroad, and how little they
spare any cost in it. After which he
tells us of them in general, that they *Id. p. 764.*
equally contemn all the Advantages of
this Life, and account them common,
foolishly taking up their *principles* about
these things without any *accurate* search
into them ; insomuch that if any *subtile*
and *crafty* Fellow, that knows how to
improve his advantage, come amongst
them, he grows very rich in a little time,
by making a prey of that simple and cre-
dulous people.

There's one circumstance yet behind
concerning the *love* and *charity* of those
times, very worthy to be taken notice
of, and that is the universal extent of
it, they *did good to all, though more espe-*
cially to them of the household of Faith ;
i. e. to Christians : they did not con-
fine their bounty merely within the

T

nar-

Part 3. narrow limits of a party, this or that Sect of Men, but embraced an Object of Love and Pity, wherever they met it. They were kind to all men, yea to their bitterest Enemies, and that with a charity as large as the *circles* of the Sun that visits all parts of the World, and shines as well upon a *stinking* Dung-hill, as upon a pleasant Garden. 'Tis certainly the strange and supernatural Doctrine of our Saviour, *You have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.* This indeed is the proper Goodness and Excellency of Christianity, as Tertullian observes, it being common to all men to love their Friends, but peculiar only to Christians to love their enemies. And Athenagoras, I remember, principally makes use of this Argument to prove the Divinity of the Christian Religion, and challenges all the great Masters of Reason and Learning among the Heathens to produce any, either of themselves or their Disciples, of so pure and refin'd a temper, as could instead of *hating*, love their Enemies, bear curses

*Ad Scap.
c. I. p. 69.*

*Leg. pro
Christian.
p. II.*

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curfes and revilings with an undisturbed Part 3.
mind, and instead of *reviling* again, to
blefs and *ſpeak well* of them, and to
pray for them who lay in wait to take
away their Lives. And yet this did
Chriſtians; they embraced their Ene-
mies, pardoned and prayed for them,
according to the *Apoſtles Rule*, *When*
their enemy hungred they fed him, when
he thirſted they gave him drink, and
would not be overcome of evil, but over-
came evil with good. When Nazianzen Vit. ejus
per Greg.
Presb.
(then Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*) lay
ſick, a young man came to his Beds
feet, and taking hold of his Feet, with
tears and great lamentation paſſionate-
ly begg'd pardon of him for his Wick-
edneſs; the Biſhop asking what he
meant by it, he was told, that this was
the perſon that had been ſuborned by a
wicked Party to have murdered him,
and now being ſtricken with the Con-
ſcience of ſo great a Wickedneſs, came
to bewail his ſin. The good man im-
mediately prayed to *Chriſt* to forgive
him, deſiring no other ſatisfaction from
him, than that henceforth he would
forſake that Heretical Party, and ſin-
cerely ſerve God as became a *Chriſtian*.
Thus when *Paul* the Martyr was ha-

Euseb. de
Mart. Pal.
c. 8. p. 332.

Part 3. **st**ening to his Execution, he only beg'd so much respite till he might pray (which accordingly he did) not only for the Peace and Happiness of *Christians*, but for the Conversion of *Jews* and *Samaritans*, for the *Gentiles* that they might be brought out of error and ignorance to the knowledge of God and the true Religion; he prayed for the People that attended his Execution; nay, (such his vast goodness and charity) for the very *Judge* that condemned him; for the *Emperours*, and the very *Executioner* that stood ready to cut off his Head, earnestly begging of God *not to lay that great wickedness to their Charge*. Nay, they did not think it enough *not to return evil for evil*, or barely to forgive their Enemies, unless they did them all the *kindness* that lay in their power. *Polycarp*

Eus. l. 4. c.
15. p. 130.

Mart. ejus
apud Sur.
ad 17. Aug.
tom. 4. ex
S. Metraph.

plentifully *feasted* the very Officers that were sent to apprehend him; the same which *S. Mamas* the Martyr is also said to have done, treating the Souldiers with the best Supper he had, when sent by *Alexander* the cruel President of *Cappadocia* to seize upon him. And we read of one *Pachomius* an Heathen Souldier, in the first times of
Con-

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Constantine, that the Army being well Part 3.
near starv'd for want of necessary Pro- Metaphr.
visions, and coming to a City that was in vit. Pa-
most inhabited by *Christians*, they freely chom. apud
and speedily gave them whatever they Sur. ad di.
wanted for the Accommodation of the em 14.
Army. Amaz'd with this strange and Matt. 20. 3.
unwonted Charity, and being told, that
the people that had done it were *Chri-*
stians, whom they generally prey'd up-
on, and whose Profession it was *to hurt*
no man, and *to do good to every man*,
he threw away his Arms, became an
Anchoret, and gave up himself to the
strictest Severities of Religion. This
also *Julian* the Emperor plainly con-
fesses; for urging *Arsacius* the Chief
Priest of *Galatia*, to take care of the ubi prius.
Poor, and to build Hospitals in every
City for the entertaining of poor
Strangers and Travellers, both of their
own and others Religions; he adds,
For it's a shame (says he) that when the
Jews suffers none of theirs to beg, and the
wicked Galileans relieve not only their
own, but also those of our Party, that we
only should be wanting in so necessary a
duty. So prevalent is Truth as to extort
a Confession from its most bitter and
virulent Opposers. Of this I shall on-

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Part 3. ly add one instance or two more, proper enough to be inserted here. *Eusebins*, speaking of that dreadful Plague and Famine that happened in the *Eastern* Parts under the Emperor *Maximinus*, wherein so many whole Families miserably perished, and were swept away at once; he adds, that at this time the care and Piety of the *Christians* towards all evidently approved it self to all the *Gentiles* that were about them; they being the only Persons that during this sad and calamitous State of things performed the real Offices of *mercy* and *humanity*; partly in ordering and *burying* of the Dead (thousands dying every day, of whom no care was taken) partly in gathering together all the *poor* that were ready to starve, and distributed Bread to every one of them. The Fame whereof fill'd the Ears and Mouths of all Men, who extolled the *God of the Christians*, and confessed that they had shewed themselves to be the only truly Pious and Religious Persons. And indeed the Charity was the more remarkable, in that the *Christians* at this very time were under a most heavy Persecution. Thus in the terrible Plague that

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that in the times of *Gallus* and *Volusi*. Part 3.
an raged so much through the whole
 World (and that more or less for fifteen
 years together) especially at *Carthage*,
 when innumerable Multitudes were
 swept away every day, and the streets
 filled with the Carcasses of the dead,
 which seemed to implore the help of
 the *living*, and to challenge it as their
 right by the common Laws of Humane
 Nature; but all in vain, every one
 trembling, flying, and shifting for them-
 selves, deserting their nearest Friends
 and Kindred, none staying unless it was
 to make a prey. In this sad and miser-
 able case *Cyprian* (then Bishop of the
 place) calls the *Christians* together, in-
 structs them in the Duties of Mercy and
 Charity, puts them in mind, that it was
 no great wonder if their Charity ex-
 tended to their *own party*; the way to
 be perfect, was to do something more
 than *Heathens* and *Publicans*, to over-
 come evil with good, to imitate the Di-
 vine Benignity, to love our enemies, and
 (according to our *Lords Advice*) to pray
 for the happiness of them that persecute
 us; that God continually made his
Sun to rise, and his *Rain* to fall, not on-
 ly for the Advantage of his *own Chil-*

*Pont. in
 vit cyp.
 p. 13.*

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Part 3. dren, but for all other mens; and that therefore they should imitate the example of such a *Father*, who professed themselves to be his *Children*. Immediately upon this they unanimously agreed to assist their common Enemies, every one lending help according to his Rank and Quality. Those who by reason of their Poverty, could contribute nothing to the Charge, did what was more, they personally wrought and labored, an Assistance beyond all other Contributions. By which large and abundant Charity great Advantage redounded not to themselves only of the *Household of Faith*, but universally unto all.

*Lact. Epi-
tom. c. 7.
p. 746.*

I shall summ up what hath been said upon this Argument, in that Elegant Discourse which *Lactantius* has concerning works of Mercy and Charity. Since Humane Nature (*says he*) is weaker than that of other Creatures, who come into the world armed with offensive and defensive Powers, therefore our Wise Creator has given us a tender and merciful Disposition, that we might place the *safeguard* of our Lives in the mutual Assistances of one another. For being all created by *one*
God,

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God, and sprung from one common parent, we should reckon our selves *akin*, and obliged to love all mankind ; and (that our Innocency may be perfect) not only not to do an *injury* to another, but not to revenge one when done to our selves ; for which reason also we are commanded to *pray for our very Enemies*. We ought therefore to be kind and sociable, that we may help and assist each other. For being our selves obnoxious to misery, we may the more comfortably hope for that help in case we need it, which our selves have given unto others. And what can more effectually induce us to relieve the Indigent, than to put our selves into their *stead*, who beg help from us ? If any be hungry, let us *feed* him ; is he naked, let us *cloath* him ; if wronged by a powerful Oppressor, let us *rescue* and receive him. Let our Doors be open to *Strangers*, and such who have not where to lay their Head. Let not our assistance be wanting to *Widows* and *Orphans*. And (which is a mighty Instance of Charity) let us *redeem* the captiv'd, *visit* and assist the sick, who are able to take no care of themselves ; and for strangers, and the poor (in case they

Part 3. they die) let us not suffer them to want the conveniency of a *Grave*. These are the Offices and the Works of Mercy, which whoever does, offers up a true and grateful Sacrifice to God; who is not pleased with the *blood of beasts*, but the *charity of Men*; whom therefore he treats upon their own terms, has *mercy* on them whom he sees *merciful*, and is *inexorable* to those who *shut up their bowels* against them that ask them. In order therefore to our thus pleasing God let us make light of Money, and transmit it into the *heavenly Treasures*, where neither *moth nor rust* doth corrupt, nor *thieves break through and steal*, nor *Tyrants* are able to seize and take it from us; but where it shall be kept to our *Eternal Advantage* under the *Custody* of God himself.

C H A P. III.

Of their Unity and Peaceableness.

The Laws of Christ tend to beget a Peaceable Disposition. This seen in our Saviour himself, in his Apostles and the whole Body of Christians. The account Justin Martyr gives of them. The World overrun with Quarrels before Christs coming. The happy Alteration that succeeded upon his appearance in it. This particularly urged by Eusebius, How much Christians contributed to the Peace and Quietness of the World. Their Unity among themselves. Canonical Epistles; the several sorts of them; Συσαλίται, Ἀπολυτίται, Εἰρηνικά. What their nature and tendency. Differences presently endeavored to be healed. The great Care and Solitude of Constantine that way. An eminent instance of Condescension and Self-denial in Gregory Nazianzen for the Peace of the Church. Difference in Rituals and lesser matters no hinderance of Peace and Christian Communion; manifested in the Case of Polycarp and Anicetus Bishop of Rome. Christians
not

Part 3. *not provoked by every trifling Quarrel. The difference in this respect between them and the best Philosophers.*

THE Primitive Christians being of such a Meek, Compassionate, and Benevolent Temper, as we have represented them, it cannot be thought but that they were of a very quiet Disposition and peaceable Conversation; and the having been so large in that will excuse me for being shorter in this. When our Blessed Saviour came to establish his Religion in the World, he gave a Law suitable to his Nature, and to the Design of his coming into the World, and to the exercise of his Government as he is Prince of Peace, a Law of Mildness and Gentleness, of Submission and Forbearance towards one another; we are commanded to *follow peace with all men, to follow after the things that make for peace, as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all men.* We are forbidden all Feuds and Quarrels, enjoined *not to revenge our selves, but to give place unto wrath, to let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking be put away from us, with all malice, to be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one*
ano-

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another, even as God for Christs sake for- Part 3.
gives us. These are the Laws of *Christi-*
anity, which whenever they are duly en-
tertained, produce the most gentle and
good-natur'd Principles, the most inno-
cent and quiet Carriage. This eminent-
ly appeared in the Life of our Blessed
Saviour, who was the most incomparable
Instance of *kindness* and *civility*, of *peace*
and *quietness*; we never find him all his
Life treating any with Sharpness and Se-
verity but the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who
were a pack of surly, malicious, *ill-na-*
tur'd fellows, and could be wrought up-
on by no other Methods; otherwise his
Mildness and Humility, the Affability
and Obligingness of his Conversation,
and his remarkable *kindness* to his great-
est Enemies, were sufficiently obvious
both in his Life and Death; and such
was the Temper of his Disciples and
Followers, this excellent Spirit (like *lea-*
ven) spreading it self over the whole
Mafs of Christians, turning *the Briar into*
a Mirtle Tree, and the Vulture into a
Dove. See the account which *Justin* Ap. 2. p. 61.
the *Martyr* gives of them. We who
formerly valued our Money and Estates
before all things else, do now put them
into a common *Stock*, and distribute
them

Part 3. them to those that are in need. We, who once hated each other, and delighted in mutual Quarrels and Slaughters, and according to the custom refused to sit at the same Fire with those who were not of our own *Tribe* and Party; now since the Appearance of Christ in the World, live familiarly with them, *pray for our Enemies*, and endeavour to persuade those that unjustly hate us to order their Lives according to the Excellent Precepts of *Christ*, that so they may have good hope to obtain the same Rewards with us from the great Lord and Judge of all things.

But for the better understanding of this, it may be useful to observe, what a remarkable Alteration in this respect the *Christian* Religion made in the World. Before *Christ's* Coming, the World was generally over-run with *feuds* and quarrels, mighty and almost implacable Animosities and Divisions reigning amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*; the *Jews* looked upon the *Gentiles* as *Dogs* and *Out-casts*, refus'd all Dealings with them, even to the denial of Courtesies of common Charity and Civility, such as to tell a man the way, or to give him

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him a draught of Water; they reproach- Part 3.
ed them as the Vilest and most Pro- Juv. Sat.
fligate part of Mankind, Sinners of 14. p. 439.
the Gentiles, as the Apostle calls them Gal. 2. 15.
according to the usual Style and Title.

Nor did the Gentiles less scorn and de-
ride the Jews, as a Pitiful and Con-
temptible Generation, stopping their
Noses, and abhorring the very sight of
them, if by chance they met them;
they looked upon them as an unsoci-
able people, as Enemies of all Nations,
that did not so much as wish well to any;

nay, as haters even of
Mankind, as Tacitus and
their Enemies in Josephus
represent them. The Ef-
fect of all which was, that
they oppressed and per-
secuted them in every
place, trod them as Dirt
under their feet, till at the
last the Romans came, and

finally took away both their Place and
Nation. Thus stood the Case between
them till the Arrival of the Prince of
Peace; who partly by his death, where-
by he broke down the partition-wall be-
tween Jew and Gentile, partly by the
Healing nature and tendency of his Do-
ctrine

Histor. lib. 5 cap. 4, 5. p. 535.
Ἔθνος ἀμικτον, ἀσυμφυλον,
ἔτε θρησκείαν τὴν αὐτὴν τοῖς
ἄλλοις ἔχον, ἔτε νόμοις χρῶ-
μενον οἰοῖσι, ἐχθρὸν δὲ καὶ
τοῖς ἕθρεσι, καὶ ἐπιτηδεύμασι
τῷ σὺ λαῷ καὶ ἅπασιν ἀν-
θρώποις—δυσμενὲς ἔθνος, καὶ
τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀλλόκοτον. Jos.
Antiq. Judaic. lib. 11. c. 6. Vide
Esther 3. 8. Vide Cic. pro
Flac. p. 368. tom. 2.

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Part 3. *Arine*, partly by the quiet and peaceable Carriage of his Followers, did quickly *extirpate* and remove those mutual feuds and animosities, and silence those passionate and quarrellous divisions that were amongst them.

*Prepar.
Evang. l. I.
c. 4. p. 10,
11. Vide
Athanas. de
Verb. Incarn.
p. 78.
tom. I.*

This Argument *Ensebins* particularly prosecutes and shews, that while the Nations were under *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, they were filled with Wars and Troubles, and all the effects of Barbarous Rage and Fury; but that after the Divine and Peaceable Doctrine of our *Saviour* came abroad, those Differences and Calamities began to cease, according to the Predictions that were of him, that *there should be righteousness and abundance of peace in his days; that men should beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; that Nation should not lift up sword against Nation, nor learn War any more; that this must needs be in some measure the effect of his appearance, his Doctrine being so fitly calculated to soften the rough and brutish manners of men, and to train them up in milder and more humane Institutions. And a little after he makes it an uncontrollable Argument of the Truth and*
Ex-

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Excellency of the *Christian* Doctrine, Part 3.
that it teaches men to bear the Re-
proaches and Provocations of Enemies
with a generous and unshaken Mind,
and to be able not to revenge ourselves,
by falling foul upon them with the like
Indignities and Affronts; to be above
Anger and Passion, and every inordi-
nate and unruly Appetite; to admini-
ster to the Wants and Necessities of the
Helpless, and to embrace every man as
our Kindred and Countryman, and
though reputed a stranger to us, yet to
own him, as if by the Law of Nature he
were our nearest Friend and Brother.
How much their Religion contributed
to the Publick Tranquillity by forbid-
ding *Pride, Passion, Covetousness*, and such
sins as are the great Springs of Confusi-
on and Disturbance, *Justin Martyr* tells *A. 2. p. 59.*
the Emperors; As for Peace (says he)
we above all men in the World promote
and further it; forasmuch as we teach
that no Wicked man, no Covetous or
Treacherous person, no good or Vertu-
ous man can lie hid from the Eye of
God, but that every man is travelling
either towards an Eternal Happiness or
Misery, according to the desert and na-
ture of his Works: and did all men

Y

know

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Part 3. know and believe this, no man would dare for a few moments to deliver up himself to vice and wickedness, knowing 'twould lead him on to the Condemnation of Everlasting Fire; but would rather by all means restrain himself, and keep within the Bounds of Vertue, that he might obtain the rewards that are dispens'd by God, and avoid the Punishments that are inflicted by him. The truth is, our blessed Lord came not to inspire men with Principles of Revenge and Passion, to teach them to *return evil for evil*, but to encourage Love and Gentleness, to teach men to overcome by Suffering, and to obtain the reward by meekness and Patience. *Isidore the Pelusiote*, treating of that place, *To him that smites thee on the right cheek, turn the other also*, has this short discourse upon it: The great King of Heaven came down from above to deliver to the World the Laws of an Heavenly Conversation; which he has proposed in a way of Conflict and Striving, quite contrary to that of the *Olympick Games*. There he that fights and gets the better receives the *Crown*; here he that is stricken and bears it meekly, has the Honor and Applause: There he that

re-

*Ep. 127.
l. 3. p. 269.*

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returns Blow for Blow, here he that **Part 3.**
turns the other cheek is celebrated in the
theatre of Angels; for the Victory is mea-
sured not by Revenge, but by a wise
and generous Patience. This is the *new*
law of Crowns, this is the new way of
Conflicts and Contentions.

Such was the Temper, such the Car-
riage of Christians towards their *Ene-*
mies, and them that were without;
within themselves they maintained the
most admirable Peace and Harmony,
and were in a manner of *one heart and*
soul. They liv'd in the strictest Amity;
and abhorr'd all Division as a Plague
and Firebrand. But because mens under-
standings not being all of one *size*, nor
all truths alike plain and evident, diffe-
rences in mens *Judgments* and *Opini-*
ons must needs arise; no Schism ever
arose in the Church about any of the
more considerable Principles of Reli-
gion, but it was presently bewailed
with the universal resentment of all pi-
ous and good men, and the breach en-
deavored to be made up; no ways
left unattempted, no Methods of Per-
suasion omitted that might contribute
to it.

When *Novatus* (or rather *Novatian*)
V a had

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Part 3. had made some *disturbance* in the Church of Rome, concerning the receiving the
Enf. Hist. lapsed into Communion, *Dionysius* (the
Eccel. l. 6. c. good Bishop of *Alexandria*) writes to
45. p. 2. 47. him to extinguish the Schism, tells him
'tis better to suffer any thing than that
the Church of God should be rent in
pieces; that it's no less glorious, and
probably more illustrious, to suffer Mar-
tyrdom to keep Division out of the
Church, than to die for not Sacrificing
to Idols; for in the one case a man suf-
fers *Martyrdom* only upon his own ac-
count, but in the other he suffers for
the advantage and benefit of the whole
Church. And *Cyprian* positively asserts,
De unit. (according to the Apostles Resolution
Eccel. p. 184 of the Case) that without this Unity
and Charity *a man cannot enter into Hea-*
ven; and that although he should deli-
ver up himself to the *flames*, or cast his
body to wild beasts, yet this would not
be the Crown of his *Faith*, but the Pu-
nishment of his *falsehood*, not the glori-
ous *exit* of a Religious Virtue, but the
issue of despair; such a one may be *kil-*
led, but he cannot be *crowned*. — He
that rents the Unity of the Church,
destroys the *Faith*, disturbs the *Peace*,
dissolves *Charity*, and profanes the *Holy*
Sa-

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Sacrament. How severely they brand- Part 3.
ed all Schism and Division in the *Church*,
how *industriously* they laboured to take
up all Controversies amongst *Christians*,
and to reconcile dissenting Brethren, to
maintain Concord and Agreement a-
mongst *themselves*, and to prevent all oc-
casions of quarrel, and dissention, might
be easily made to appear out of the wri-
ters of those times. Hencethose *Canon-
ical* Epistles (as they call'd them) where-
with persons were wont to be furnish'd
when going from one place to another;
of which there were especially three
sorts. First, *Συναγῆ*, or *Commendatory*
Epistles, mentioned by S. *Paul*, and were
in use amongst the Heathens. They
were granted to *Clergy-men* going into
another *Diocese*, by the Bishop that or-
dained them, testifying their Ordinati-
on, their Soundness and Orthodoxy in
the Faith, the Innocency and Unblame-
ableness of their Lives. To those that
had been under, or had been suspected
of *Excommunication*, declaring their Ab-
solution, and recommending them to
be received in the number of the *faith-
ful*. Lastly, they were granted to all,
whether *Clergy* or *Laity*, that were to
travel, as *Tickets* of *Hospitality*, that

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Part 3. wherever they came, upon the producing these Letters they might be known to be *Catholick* and *Orthodox*, and as such received and entertained by them. A piece of Prudence which *Julian the Apostate* admired in the *Christian* Constitution, the like whereto he endeavored to establish in his Pagan Reformation. The Second sort were *Ἀπολυτικά*, Letters *Dimissory*, whereby Leave was given to persons going into another Diocese, either to be *ordained* by the Bishop of that place, or if ordain'd already, to be admitted and *incorporated* into the Clergy of that Church. Upon which account the ancient *Councils* every where provide that no stranger shall either receive Ordination at the hands of another Bishop, or exercise any Ministerial act in another Diocese, without the Consent and *Dimissory* Letters of the Bishop of that place from whence he comes. The third were *Εἰρηνικά*, Letters of Peace, granted by the Bishop, to the Poor that were oppressed, and such as fled to the Church for its protection and assistance: but especially to such of the Clergy as were to go out of one Diocese into another, it being directed to the Bishop of that

Dio-

Sax. Hist.
Ecccl. l. 5. c.
16. p. 617.
Naz. in
Jnl. 1.
p. 102.

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Diocese, that he would receive him, Part 3. that so he might take no offence, but that peaceable Concord and Agreement might be maintained between them. By these Arts the Prudence of those Times sought to secure the peace of the Church, and as much as might be, prevent all Dissentions that might arise. And where matters of any greater moment fell out, how quickly did they flock together to compose and heal them?

Hence those many *Synods* and *Councils* that were conven'd to umpire Differences, to explain, or *define Articles* of Faith, to condemn and suppress the Disturbers of the Church, and Innovators in Religion. What infinite Care did the good Emperor *Constantine* take for composing the *Arrian* Controversies which then began first to infect and overrun the World? How much his Heart was set upon it, his solicitous Thoughts taken up about it? how many troublesome days, and restless nights it cost him? with what strong and nervous Arguments, what affectionate Intreaties he presses it, may be seen in that excellent Letter (yet extant in his Life) which he wrote to the *Authors* of those

De vit.
Const. l. 2.
c. 64. &
seq. p. 473.

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Part 3. impious and unhappy Controversies.

But when this would not do, he summon'd the great Council of *Nice*, consisting of *three hundred and eighteen Bishops*, and in his Speech at the opening of that Council, conjur'd them by all that was dear and sacred to agree, and to compose those Dissentions which were risen in the Church; which he seriously protested he looked upon as more grievous and dangerous than any War whatsoever, and that they created greater trouble and inquietude to his Mind, than all the other Affairs of his

Empire. And when several of the Bishops then in Council, had preferred *Libels* and Accusations one against another, without ever reading them, he bundled and sealed them all up together, and having reconciled and made them friends, produced the Papers, and immediately threw them into the Fire before their Faces. So passionately desirous was that good Prince to extinguish the Flames, and to redeem the Peace of the Church at any rate. Were any *ejected* and thrown out of the Church, of which there might be a suspicion of private Grudges or Designs, the *Nicene* Council wisely provided,

Ib. l. 3. c. 12.
p. 489.

Theod. Hist.
Ecc. l. 1.
c. 11. p. 25.

Cap. 5.

313 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 3.

vided, that in every Province a *Synod* Part 3. should be held twice a year, where all the Bishops meeting together, might discuss the case, and compose the difference. Or (as *Joseph the Egyptian* in his *Arabick* Version of that *Canon* tells us) an *Arbitrator* was to be appointed between the differing Parties to take up the Quarrel, that it might not be a scandal to Religion.

Nor did there want meek and peaceable-minded men, who valued the *publick* welfare before any *private* and personal Advantage, and could make their own particuilar concerns strike Sail, when the Peace and Interest of the Church call'd for it. When great Contests and Confusions were raised by some perverse and unquiet persons about the See of *Constantinople*, (then possesst by *Gregory Nazianzen*) he himself stood up in the midst of the Assembly, and told the Bishops how unfit it was, that they who were *Preachers* of Peace to others, should fall out amongst themselves, begg'd of them even by the *Sacred Trinity* to manage their Affairs calmly and peaceably; and, *If I* (says he) *be the Jonas that raises the Storm, throw me into the Sea, and let these storms*

Vit. Greg.
Nax. per.
Greg.
Presb.

314 Primitibe Christianity. Ch. 3.

Part 3. *storms and tempests cease. I am willing to undergo whatever you have a mind to; and though innocent and unblameable, yet for your peace and quiet sake, am content to be banished the throne, and to be cast out of the City; only according to the Prophets Counsel, be careful to love truth and peace: and therewith freely resigned his Bishoprick, though legally settled in it by the expresse Command and Warrant of the Emperor, and the universal desires and acclamations of the People.*

The same excellent Temper ruled in *S. Chrysostom*, one of his Successors in that See; when having elegantly preserved the Unity of the Church, and refuted those petty Cavils which his Adversaries had made against himself: *But if you (says he to his People) suspect these things of us, we are ready to deliver up our Place and Power to whomsoever you will; only let the Church be preserved in peace and unity.* This was the brave and noble disposition of mind, to which *S. Clemens* sought to reduce the *Corinthians*, after they had fallen into a little Schism and Disorder: Who is there among you (says he) of that generous Temper, that *compassionate and charitable*

*Hon. 11. in
Ep. ad Eph.
3. 1110.*

*Ep. ad Cor.
2. 99.*

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 315

ble Disposition? Let him say, if this Part 3.
Sedition, these *Schisms* and *Contentions*
 have arisen through my means, or upon
my account, I'll depart and begon whi-
 thersoever you please, and will do what
 the People shall command; only let
Christs Sheepfold, together with the *El-*
ders that are placed over it, be kept in
 peace.

Nay, when good men were most Zea-
 lous about the Main and Foundation
 Articles of Faith, so as sometimes rather
 to hazard *peace*, than to betray the
truth, yet in matters of *Indifferency*,
 and such as only concerned the *Rituals*
 of Religion, they mutually bore with
 one another, without any Violation of
 that Charity which is the great Law of
 Christianity. Thus in that famous con-
 troversie about the keeping of Easter,
 so much agitated between the *Eastern*
 and *Western* Churches, *Irenæus* in a Let-
 ter to *Pope Victor* (who of all that ever
 sat in that Chair, had raised the greatest
 stir about it) tells him, that Bishops in
 former times, however they differed a-
 bout the Observation of it, yet always
 maintain'd an intire *concord* and fellow-
 ship with one another, the Churches be-
 ing careful to maintain a *peaceable* com-
 munion,

Enf. Hist.
Ecclesi. 5. c.
 24. p. 193.

Ch. 3. Primitive Christianity. 316

Part 3. munion, though differing in some particular Rites and Ceremonies, yea, even when their rites and customs seemed to clash by meeting together at the same place. Thus when *Polycarp* came to *Rome* from the Churches of the *East*, to treat with *Pope Anicetus* about this and some other affairs, though they could not satisfy each other to yield the *Controversie*, yet they *kissed* and embraced one another with mutual endearments, received the *Holy Communion* together; and *Anicetus* (to do the greater Honor to *Polycarp*) gave him leave to celebrate and consecrate the *Eucharist* in his Church, and at last they parted in great peace and friendship; the difference of the Observation not at all hindering the Agreement and Harmony of the Churches, it being agreed amongst them by common consent (says *Sozomen* speaking of this passage) that in keeping this Festival, they should each follow their own custom, but by no means break the peace and communion that was between them; for they reckoned it (says he) a very foolish and unreasonable thing, that they should fall out for a few Rites and Customs, who agreed in the main Principles of Religion.

Hist. Eccl.
l. 7. c. 19.
p. 734.

Ch. 3. Primitibe Christianity. 317

The Christians of those times had too Part 3.
 deeply imbibed that Precept of our
 Saviour, *Love one another as I have lo-*
ved you, to fall out about every nice
 and trifling Circumstance; no, when
 highliest provoked and affronted they
 could *forbear* and *forgive* their *Enemies*,
 much more their *Brethren*, and were
 not like the *waspsish Philosophers* amongst
 the *Heathens*, who were ready to fall
 foul upon one another for every petty
 and inconsiderable difference of Opi-
 nion that was amognt them. So Ori-
 gen tells *Celsus*, Both against your Lib. 5.
P. 273.
 Philosophers and Physicians (says he)
 there are *Sects* that have perpetual
 Feuds and Quarrels with each other;
 whereas we who have entertained the
 Laws of the Blessed *Jesus*, and have
 learnt both to speak and to do accord-
 ing to his Doctrine, *Bless them that re-*
vile us; being persecuted, we suffer it;
being defamed, we entreat. Nor do we
 speak dire and dreadful things against
 those that differ from us in *Opinion*, and
 do not presently embrace those things
 which we have entertain'd; but (as
 much as in us lies) we leave nothing un-
 attempted that may persuade them to
 change for the better, and to give up
 them-

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Part 3. themselves only to the Service of the great Creator, and to do all things as those that must give an account of their Actions. In short, Christians were careful not to offend either God or Men, but to keep and maintain Peace with both; thence that excellent Saying of *Vit. Ephr. Ephræm Syrus*, the famous Deacon of Edessa, when he came to die; *In my whole life (said he) I never reproached my Lord and Master, nor suffered any foolish talk to come out of my lips, nor did I ever curse or revile any man, or maintain the least difference or controversie with any Christian in all my life.*

Vit. Ephr.
Syr. per
Greg. Nyss.
tom. 2.
p. 1033.

C H A P. IV.

Of their Obedience and Subjection to Civil Government.

Magistracy the great Band of Publick Peace. This highly secured by Christianity. The Laws of Christ that way express and positive. Made good in his own practice, and the practice of his Apostles. The same Spirit in succeeding Ages, manifested out of Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Tertullian, and Origen.

Ch. 4. *Primitibe Christianity.* 319

*rigen. Praying for Rulers and Empe- Part 3-
rours a solemn part of their publick
Worship. Their ready payment of all
Customs and Tributes, and their Faith-
fulness in doing it. Christians such
even under the heaviest Oppressions and
Persecutions, and that when they had
power to have righted and revenged
themselves. An excellent passage in
Tertullian to that purpose. The tem-
per of the Christian Souldiers in Ju-
lians Army. The famous Story of
Mauricius, and the Thebæan Legion
under Maximianus reported at large
out of Eucherius Lugdunensis. The
injustice of the Charge brought against
them by the Heathens, of being Ene-
mies to Civil Government. Accused of
Treason. Of their refusing to swear by
the Emperors Genius. Their denying
to sacrifice for the Emperors Safe-
ty, and why they did so. Their re-
fusing to own the Emperours for Gods,
and why. Their not observing the So-
lemn Festivals of the Emperors, and
the reasons of it. Accused of Sediti-
on, and holding Unlawful Combinati-
ons. An account of the Collegia and
Societies in the Roman Empire. Chri-
stianity forbidden upon that account.*

The

Part 3.

The Christian Assemblies no unlawful Conventions. A vast difference between them and the unlawful Factions forbidden by the Roman Laws. Their confident challenging their Enemies to make good one Charge of Disturbance or Rebellion against them. Their Laws and Principles quite contrary. The Heathens themselves guilty of Rebellions and Factions, not the Christians. The testimony given them by Julian the Emperor. A reflection upon the Church of Rome for corrupting the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity in this Affair. Their principles and policies in this matter. Bellarmin's position, That 'tis lawful to depose Infidel and Heretical Princes, and that the primitive Christians did it not to Nero, Dioclesian, &c. only because they wanted power, censured and refuted. This contrary to the avow'd principles of honest Heathens.

HOW much Christian Religion transcribed into the Lives of its Professors contributes to the Happiness of Men, not only in their single and private capacities, but as to the publick welfare of Humane Societies, and to the com-

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 321

common Interests and Conveniencies of Part 3.
Mankind, we have already discovered
in several Instances; now because *Ma-*
gistracy and Civil Government is the
great support and instrument of exter-
nal peace and happiness, we shall in the
last place consider how eminent the first
Christians were for their *Submission*
and *Subjection to Civil Government*.
And certainly there's scarce any par-
ticular Instance wherein *Primitive Chri-*
stianity did more triumph in the world,
than in their exemplary Obedience to
the Powers and Magistrates under
which they lived; honouring their
Persons, revering their Power, paying
their Tribute, obeying their Laws,
where they were not evidently con-
trary to the Laws of *Christ*; and
where they were submitting to the
most cruel Penalties they laid upon
them with the greatest calmness and se-
renity of Soul. The truth is, one great
design of the *Christian Law* is to secure
the Interests of *civil Authority*; our
Saviour has expressly taught us, *that we*
are to give unto Cæsar the things that
are Cæsars, as well as unto God the things
that are Gods. And his Apostles spoke
as plainly as words could speak it; Let

Part 3. every soul be subject to the higher Powers; for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordain'd of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the Ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for Conscience sake. For, for this cause pay you tribute also; for they are Gods Ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Where we may take notice both of the strictness and universality of the Charge (and what is mainly material to observe) this Charge given the Romans, at that time when Nero was their Emperor, who was not only an Heathen Magistrate, but the first persecutor of Christians, a man so prodigiously brutish and tyrannical, that the world scarce ever brought forth such another Monster, *δεισιον ἐν μορφῇ ἀνθρώπου*, as the Orator truly stiles him, *A Beast in the shape of a Man*. The same Apostle amongst other Directions given to Titus for the discharge of his Office, bids him put the people in mind to be subject to principalities and

Ch. 4. **Primitive Christianity.** 323

and powers, and to obey Magistrates. S. Peter deliversthe same doctrine to a tittle, Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

Such are the *commands*, and such was the *practise* of *Christ* and his *Apostles*. When a *tax* was demanded of him, though he was the *Son of God*, he refused not to pay tribute unto *Cesar*, even when it put him to the expence and charges of a *Miracle*. When arraigned for his *Life* at *Pilates Bar*, he freely owned his *Authority*, and cheerfully submitted to that wicked and unrighteous Sentence, though able to command more than *twelve legions of Angels* for his *Rescue* and *Deliverance*. The *Apostles*, though unjustly scourged before the *Council*, yet made no tart Reflections, but *went away rejoicing*. When *Herod* had cut off *S. James* his Head, and consigned *Peter* in prison, to the same *Butchery* and *Execution*, what *arms* did the *Christians* use, rise up and

Part 3. put him out of the Throne, scatter *libels*, raise *tumults* or *factions* in the City? Oh no, the Churches weapons were *Prayers* and *Tears* their only Refuge in those evil times.

Nor did this excellent Spirit die with the Apostles; we find the same temper ruling in the succeeding Ages of Christianity. The Christians (says one of the *Ancients*) obey the Laws that are made, and by the Exactness of their Lives, go *beyond* that Accuracy, which the Law requires of them; they love all men, though all men study to afflict and persecute them. Are there any (as *Athenagoras* concludes his Address to the *Emperors*) more devoted to you than we? who pray for the Happiness of your Government that according to Right and Equity the *Son* may succeed his *Father* in the Empire, that your Dominions may be enlarged, and that all things may prosper that you take in hand; and this we do as that which turns both to yours and our own Advantage, that so *under you leading a quiet and peaceable Life*, we may cheerfully obey all those Commands which you lay upon us. St. *Polycarp*, a little before his Martyrdom wrote to the *Christians* at

Just. Mart.
Epist. ad
Diogn.
p. 497.

Lig. pro
Christian.
p. 39.

Apud Euf.
l. 3 c. 35.
p. 108.

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 325

at *Philippi*, earnestly exhorting them all Part 3.
to obey their Rulers, and to exercise
all Patience and *Long-suffering* towards
them. And when he stood before the
Proconsul, he told him, that this was
the great Law of *Christianity*, that we
are commanded by God to give all due
Honor and Obedience to Princes and
Potentates, such as is not *prejudicial* to
us; *i.e.* (for so doubtless he means) such
as is not *contrary* to the Principles of
our Religion. *Tertullian* tells us, 'twas a
solemn part of the *Church Service* in his
time, to pray for the happiness and Pro-
sperity of the Princes under whom they
liv'd: *We pray* (says he) *for the Empe-
rors, for the Grandees and Ministers of
State, for the prosperity of the Age, for the
quietness of Affairs, for the continuance
of their Lives and Government; that God
would give them a long Life, a secure Reign,
an undisturbed House, powerful Armies,
faithful Senators, honest Subjects, a quiet
People, and indeed whatever they can wish
for, either as Men or Emperors.* They
that think (says he) that we are not
solicitous about the *safety* of Princes,
let them look into the Commands of
God recorded in our *Scriptures*, which
we freely expose to the View of all;

*Ib. l. 4. c. 15
p. 132.*

*Ap. c. 39.
p. 31.*

Ibid. c. 31.

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Epist. ad
Diogn.
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Apud Euseb.
l. 3. c. 36.
p. 102.

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p. 132.
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of their Lives and Government; that God
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an undisturbed House, powerful Armies,
faithful Senators, honest Subjects, a quiet
People, and indeed whatever they can wish
for, either as Men or Emperors. They
that think (says he) that we are not *Id. c. 31.*
solicitous about the *safety* of Princes,
let them look into the Commands of
God recorded in our *Scriptures*, which
we freely expose to the View of all;

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Part 3. there they'l find that we are enjoyn'd to pray for the *happinefs* of our very *enemies* and persecutors; and who are so much such as they? And yet we are plainly and particularly commanded to pray for *Kings, for Princes, and all that are in Authority, that the state of things may be quiet and peaceable.* A Christian being an *enemy to no man*, is much less so to his Prince. Thus when *Celsus* seemed to object, as if the *Christians* refused to help the *Emperors* in their Wars, *Origen* answers, that they did really assist and help him, and that rather with *divine* than *humane* Weapons, according to the command of the Apostle, *I exhort, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for Kings and all that are in Authority.* And he tells him, that the more eminent any man is for Piety and Religion, he will be able to afford greater Assistance to his Prince, than a great many Armed Souldiers that stand ready to fight for him, and to destroy his Enemies.

For all *customs* and *tributes* none ever paid them more freely than they. For *Ap. 2. p 64.* your *taxes* and *tributes* (says *Justin Martyr* to the *Emperors*) we are above all

Lib. 8.
p. 426.

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 327

all other men every where ready to Part 3.
bring them in to your Collectors and
Officers, being taught so to do by
our great Master, who bad those that
asked the question whether they might
pay Tribute unto *Cæsar*, to give unto
Cæsar the things that are Cæsars, and un-
to God the things that are Gods. For
which reason we worship none but
God: and as for you, in all other things
we chearfully serve you, acknowledg-
ing you to be *Emperors* and Govern-
ours of Men, and praying that toge-
ther with your Imperial Power you
may have a wise and discerning Judg-
ment and understanding. If the *Empe-*
ror command me to pay Tribute (says
another of their *Apologists*) I am ready
to do it; if my *Lord* command me to
serve and obey him, I confess my Obli-
gation to it. Man is to be serv'd with
that respect that is due to man; but
God only, who is Invisible and Incom-
prehensible, is to be *religiously* fear'd and
honor'd: if commanded to deny him,
I must disobey, and die rather than be
found perfidious and ingrateful to
him. So *Tertullian* tells them, that al-
though they refused to pay the Taxes
rated upon them for Maintenance of

Tatian O-
rat contra
Græc. p.
144.

Ap. c. 42
p. 34.

328 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 4.

Part 3. the *Heathen Temples*, yet for all other Tributes they had cause to give the *Christians* thanks for so faithfully paying what was due, it being their Principle to abstain from defrauding of others; insomuch, that should they examine their Accounts how much of the Assessments was lost by the fraud and couzenage of them of their own Party, they would easily find that the *Christians* denial to pay that one Tax was abundantly compensated and made up in their honest payment of all the rest. The truth is, they were admirably exact and conscientious as in all their actions, so especially in those that related to the publick, and concern'd their duty and obedience to their Rulers and Governors.

Nor were they thus only in *prosperous* Times, but under the heaviest Persecutions, as indeed the Rod was seldom off their Backs. The last mentioned *Apologist* bids their Judges go on to butcher them, and tells them they did but force those *souls* out of their *bodies*, which were praying to God for the Emperour's Happiness, even while their Officers were doing of it. And *Cyprian* tells the *Proconsul*, that as badly

Cap. 30.
p. 27.

At Demet.
p. 202.

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 329

ly as they were used, yet they ceased Part 3.
not to pray for the overthrow and Expulsion of the Common Enemies, for seasonable Showers, and either for the removing or mitigating Publick Evils, begging of God day and night with the greatest instance and importunity for the peace and Safety of their Persecutors, endeavoring to pacifie and propitiate God, who was angry with the Iniquities of the Age. Nor were they thus kind and good natur'd, thus submissive and patient for want of Power, and because they knew not how to help it: *Tertullian* answers in this case, that if they thought it lawful to *return evil for evil*, they could in one night, with a few *Firebrands*, plentifully revenge themselves; that they were no small and inconsiderable Party, and that they needed not betake themselves to the little arts of skulking Revenges, being able to appear in the capacity of Open Enemies; that though but of yesterdays standing, yet they had filled all places, all *Offices* of the Empire; and what Wars were not they able to manage, who could so willingly give up themselves to be slain? Did not the Law of Christianity ob-

*Ap. c. 37.
p. 30.*

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Part 3. oblige them to be *killed* rather than to *kill* ; nay, that they need not take up Arms and rebell ; for their party was so *numerous*, that should they but agree together to leave the *Roman Empire*, and to go into some remote Corner of the World, the loss of so many Members would utterly ruine it, and they would stand amaz'd and affrighted at that solitude and desolation that would ensue upon it, and have more *enemies* than loyal *subjects* left amongst them ; whereas now they had the fewer *enemies* for having so many *Christians*.

Neg. in-
sect. 1. in
Jul. 7. 94.

The *Christians* then opposed not their Enemies with the Points of their *swords*, but with solid *Arguments* and milde Intreaties. Thus when *Julian* the *Emperour* urg'd his Army, which was almost wholly made up of *Christians*, to wicked Counsels, and the practices of Idolatry, they withstood him only with *prayers* and *tears*, accounting this (says my Author) to be the *only* Remedy against Persecution. So far were they from resisting or rebelling, that they could quietly *die* at the *Emperors* Command, even when they had Power lying at their foot. I cannot in this place omit the memorable Instance
of

Ch. 4. Primitive Christianity. 337

of the *Theban Legion*, being so exceedingly *apposite* and pertinent to my purpose, and so remarkable as no Age can furnish out such another Instance; I shall set down the story entirely out of the *Author* himself, the account of their Martyrdom written by *Eucherius* Bishop of *Lyons*, who assures us he received the relation from very credible hands; and it is thus:

Maximianus Caesar (whom *Dioclesian* had lately taken to be his Colleague in the *Empire*) a bad man, and a bitter Persecutor of the *Christians*, was sent into *France*, to suppress a Mutiny and Rebellion risen there; to strengthen his Army there was added to it a Band of *Christians* called the *Theban Legion*, consisting (according to the manner of the *Romans*) of six thousand six hundred sixty six Faithful, Expert, and Resolute Souldiers. Coming to *Ododurus* (a place in *Savoie*), and being ready to offer Sacrifice to the Gods, he causes his Army to come together, and commands them under a great Penalty to swear by the *Altars* of their Gods, that they would unanimously fight against their Enemies, and persecute the *Christians* as *Enemies* to the Gods; which the *The-*
bean

Part 3.
Mart. SS.
Maricii
& socior.
ab Eucher.
Lugdunens.
conscript.
apud Sur.
ad diem
22 Sept:
p. 220. &c.
Edit. Colon.
1618.

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Part 3. *bean Legion* no sooner understood, but they presently withdrew to *Aganum*, (a place eight miles off, call'd at this day *S. Maurits*, from *Mauricius* the Commander of the *Legion*; a place equally *pleasant* and *strong*, being encompassed about with craggy and inaccessible Rocks) to avoid, if it might be the wicked and sacrilegious Command, and to refresh themselves tired with so long a March; but the Emperor taking notice of the Army as they came to swear, quickly mis'd the *Legion*; and being angry sent Officers to them to require them forthwith to do it; who enquiring what it was that they were commanded to do, were told by the Messengers, that all the Souldiers had offered Sacrifices, and had taken the forementioned Oath, and that *Cæsar* commanded them to return presently and do the like. To whom the Heads of the *Legion* mildly answered, that for this reason they left *Ostodurus*, because they had heard they should be forced to Sacrifice; that being *Christians*, and that they might not be defiled with the Altars of *Devils*, they thought themselves obliged to worship the *living God*, and to keep that Religion

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gion which they had entertained in the Part 3. *East* to the last hour of their Life: that as they were a *Legion*, they were ready to any service of the War; but to return to him to commit Sacrilege as he commanded, they could not yield.

With this Answer the Messengers returned and told the Emperor, that they were resolved not to obey his Commands; who being transported with anger, began thus to vent his passion: *Do my Souldiers think thus to slight my Royal Orders, and the holy Rites of my Religion? Had they only despis'd the Imperial Majesty, it would have call'd for publick Vengeance; but together with the Contempt of me, an Affront is offered to Heaven, and the Roman Religion is as much despised as I am. Let the obstinate Souldiers know, that I am not only able to vindicate my self, but to revenge the quarrel of my Gods. Let my faithful Servants make haste, and dispatch every tenth man, according as the fatal Lot shall fall upon him. By this equal death, let those whose Lot it shall be to die first, know how able Maximian is severely to revenge both himself and his Gods. With that the Command is given, the Executioners sent, the Emperours plea-*

Part 3. pleasure made known, and every *tenth* man is put to death; who chearfully offer'd their Necks to the Executioners, and the only Contention amongst them was, who should *first* undergo that glorious death. This done, the *Legion* is commanded to return to the rest of the Army. Whereupon *Mauricius* the General of the *Legion*, calling it a little aside, thus bespake them: I congratulate (most Excellent *Fellow Souldiers*) your *courage* and valour, that for the Love of *Religion*, the Command of *Cæsar* has made no impression upon you; you have seen your Fellow Souldiers, with minds full of joy, undergoing a glorious death; how much afraid was I, lest being arm'd (and how easie is it for such to do so) you should under a pretence of *defending* them have endeavor'd to hinder their happy Funerals. — See, I am encompassed round with the Bodies of my Fellow Souldiers, whom the dismal Executioner has torn from my side; I am besprinkled with the Blood of the *Saints*, my Cloaths died with the *Reliques* of their Sacred *Blood*; and shall I doubt to follow their *death*, whose *example* I so much congratulate and admire? Shall I concern my self to think

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think what the *Emperor* commands, Part 3.
who is equally subject to the same law
of Mortality with my self? — I re-
member we once took this *military*
Oath, that with the utmost hazard of
our Lives we would defend the Com-
monwealth; this we then engaged
to the *Emperours*, though no *heavenly*
Kingdom was promised to us: and if
we could promise this out of *Devotion*
to a *military* Service, what then is to
be done when Christ promises so much
to them that engage with him? Let
us willingly expose our Lives to this
most precious death; let us shew a Ma-
culine courage and an unviolated Faith.
Methinks I see those Blessed Souls stand-
ing before *Christs* Tribunal, whom the
Emperors Officer just now banished
out of their Bodies: that's the true
glory which will recompence the short-
ness of this Life with a blessed Eternity.
Let us by the Messengers unanimously
return this Answer to the Emperour;
We acknowledge, Caesar, that we are your
Souldiers, and took up Arms for defence
of the Empire; nor did we ever basely
betray our trust, or forsake our station, or
deserv'd that the brand either of Fear or
Cowardise should be set upon us; nor
should

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Part 3. *Should we stick now to obey your Commands, did not the Laws of Christianity, wherein we have been instructed, forbid us to worship Devils, and to approach the polluted Altars of the Gods. We understand you are resolved either to defile us with sacrilegious worship, or to terrifie us with a Decimation : spare any further search concerning us; know we are all Christians, our Bodies we yield subject to your Power, but our Souls we reserve intire for Christ the Author, and the Saviour of them.*

This was no sooner spoken, and universally agreed to by the *Legion*, but it was carried to the *Emperour*, who exasperated with such a generous resolution, commanded a *second Decimation*, which was immediately executed, and the rest as before commanded to return to *Othodorus*; hereupon *Exuperius* the *Ensign*, catching up his *Colors*, thus address'd himself to them; You see me (*most excellent fellow Souldiers*) holding these *Ensigns* of *Secular Warfare*; but these are not the *Arms* that I call you to, these are not the *Wars* to which I excite your *Courage* and *Valor*; 'tis another kind of fighting that we are to chuse; they are not these *Swords*
that

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that must make our way into the *Heavenly Kingdom*; we stand in need of an undaunted Mind, and invincible defence, a maintaining the Faith which we have given to God, to the very last. — Let the dismal Executioner go and carry this Message to his bloody Master, and tell him thus, We are, *O Emperour, your Souldiers*, but withal, (which we freely confess) the *Servants of God*; to you we owe Military Service, to him *Innocency*; from you we have received *wages* for our Labours, from him we had our very *lives and beings*: we cannot herein *obey* the Emperour, so as to *deny* God, the Author of our Lives, yea, and of yours too, whether you will or no. Nor is it, Sir, any Despair (which is always stoutest in greatest straits) that makes us thus resolute against you; we have (you see) *arms*, and yet make no resistance, choosing rather to *die* than to *overcome*, and desirous rather to perish *innocent*, than to live rebellious and revengeful. If you have a mind to appoint us to any greater and severer Torments, we are ready for them. *Christians* we are, and therefore can not persecute those that are so. You must needs acknowledge
Y the

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Part 3. the unconquerable Courage of this *Legion*; we throw down our Arms, your Officer will find our right hands naked, but our Breast armed with a true Catholick Faith. Kill us, and trample on us, we undauntedly yield our Necks to the Executioners Sword: These things are the more pleasant to us, while setting light by your sacrilegious Attempts, we hasten apace to the Heavenly Crown.

Maximianus being told this, and despairing now to break their Constancy, commands his whole Army to fall upon them and cut them off, which they did accordingly without any difference of Age or Person, mangling their Bodies, and then taking the Spoils, the *Emperor* having so appointed, that who ever kill'd any of the *Legion*, should have the Spoils of him whom he kill'd. And thus they died with their Swords in their hands, when they might have preserved their Lives (especially in a place so advantageous) by force of Arms, or to be sure have sold them at the dearest rate. This story I have been willing to set down the more at large, because so remarkable in all its Circumstances, and containing the most

un-

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unparallel'd Instance of Christian Piety Part 3.
and Submission, (next to that of our
Blessed *Saviour*) that I think was ever
known in the World.

This is the account of those Noble *Martyrs*: only to prevent Mistakes we
are to take notice, that there was ano-
ther *Mauritius* Commander of a *Legion*
in the *East*, (mention'd in the *Greek Me-
nologies*) who together with seventy of
his Souldiers were condemned by, and
suffered under this self-same Emperor
Maximianus, for refusing to do Sacri-
fice; their Martyrdom being recorded
by *Simeon Metaphrastes*, but the account
quite different both as to *persons* and
things from that which is here re-
lated.

Menol. Gr.
ἐν ἡμέρᾳ
κς. ἰς.
sub lit. d.

Apud Str.
ad diem
18 Jul.
tom. 4.

By what has been said we may see
the Injustice of that Charge which the
Heathens sometimes laid upon the *Chri-
stians*, that they were *disturbers* of the
Peace, and *Enemies* to Civil Govern-
ment; an Indictment so purely false,
and without any shadow of a real pre-
tence to cover it, that the *ingenious*
Heathen in *Minutius Fælix* (though
raking up all the Calumnies he could
find, and putting the deepest die upon
every charge which Wit and Eloquence

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Part 3. could put upon it, yet) had not the face so much as once to mention it. But however, as groundless as it was, they were frequently charg'd with it. Sometimes they were accused of *disloyalty* and treason, either because they would not *swear* by the Emperours *genius*, or not sacrifice for his *safety*, or not worship the *Emperours* as *Divi*, or Gods, or not celebrate their *festivals* in the same way with others. For the first, their refusing to *swear* by the Emperours *genius*, we have heard before what *Tertullian* answers to it, That it was in effect to give *Divine Honour* to *Devils*. To the second, their not *sacrificing* for the Emperours *safety*, he answers, That none *sacrificed* to so good purpose as they, for that they Offered up Prayers to the True, Living and Eternal God, for the safety of the *Emperours*, that God, whom the *Emperours* themselves did above all others desire should be propitious and favourable to them, as from whom they knew they deriv'd their Government. For the third, their refusing to own the *Emperours* for Gods, he tells them, They could not do it, partly because they would not lie in saying so, partly because they durst not by

Ap. c. 30.
p. 27.

Ib. c. 33.
p. 28. Vide
Theoph. Antioch. l. 1.
p. 76.

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Part 3.

by doing it *mock* and deride the *Empe-*
rou, nay, that he himself would not
 be willing to be stiled *God*, if he re-
 membred that he was a *man*, it being
 Mans interest to yield to *God*; that the
 Title of *Emperor* was great enough,
 and that he could not be call'd *God*,
 without being denied to be *Empe-*
rou; that he was therefore *Great*, be-
 cause *less* than *Heaven*; and that if he
 would needs be a *deity*, he must first
 conquer *Heaven*, lead *God* in *Triumph*,
 set *guards* in *Heaven*, and impose *tri-*
bute upon that place. For the last, their
 not observing the solemn *festivals* of the
Emperours, for which they were ac-
 counted *Enemies* to the publick, they
 pleaded that their Religion and their
 conscience could not comply with that
vanity, that *luxury*, and *debauchery*, and
 all manner of Excess and wickedness
 that was committed at those times; that
 the publick *Joy* was expressed by that
 which was a publick *disgrace*, and those
 things accounted *honourable* upon the
solemn days of *Emperours*, which were
unfit and uncomely to be done upon *any*
 days; and that there was little reason
 they should be accused for not observ-
 ing that, where *loosness* of manners was

ib. c. 30.

ib. c. 35.
p. 28.

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Part 3. accounted *loyalty*, and the occasion of *luxury* a part of *Religion*.

Otherwhiles they were accused of *Sedition*, and holding *unlawful Combinations*, which arose upon the account of their Religious Assemblies, which their Enemies beheld as *societies* erected contrary to the *Roman Laws*. That we may the better apprehend what these *societies* were, (in the number whereof they reckoned the *Christian Meetings*) and how condemned by the *Roman Laws*, we are to know that in the Infancy of the *Roman Commonwealth* *Numa Pompilius*, to take away the Difference between the *Sabines* and the *Romans*, divided the People into *Colledges* and little Corporations, (answerable to which are our *City Companies*) according to their several *Trades* and Occupations, *Goldsmiths*, *Dyers*, *Potters*, *Curriers*, &c. which together with the City, increased to a great number; (*Panciroll* out of both *Codes* gives us an account of thirty six) to these he assigned their several Halls, times of meeting, and Sacred Rites, and such Immunities as were most proper for them. But besides these appointed by Law, several *Colledges* in imitation

Plut. in
vit. Num.
p. 71.

Append. ad
Notit. Im-
per. fo. 197.

on

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on of them were erected in most parts Part 3^d of the *Empire*, partly for the more convenient dispatch of business, but principally for the maintenance of mutual love and friendship. All these *Societies* had their Solemn Meetings, and customary *Feasts*, which in time degenerated into great Excess and Luxury, insomuch that *Varro* in his time complained, that the Excess and Prodigality of their Suppers made Provisions dear; and much more reason had *Tertulian* to complain of it in his time. Answerable to these *Colledges* amongst the *Romans*, were the *ἐταπρία*, or *Societies* amongst the *Græcians*, who also had their stated and common Feasts, such were the *ἀνδρεία* amongst the *Cretians*, the *συσίτια* at *Lacedæmon*, and so in other States of *Greece*. But these Meetings (those of them especially that were not settled either by the Decree of the *Senate*, or the Constitution of the Prince) partly by reason of their Number, and the great Confluence to them, partly by reason of their Luxurious Feasting, began to be looked upon by the State with a jealous Eye, especially after that the *Commonwealth* was turned into a *Monarchy*, the Empe-

*Collegiorum cœne immutabiles intendunt annuam. Var. apud Jac. Gothofr. in C. To. l. 16. tit. 10. l. 20. * Apol. c. 39. p. 32.*

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Part 3. rours beholding them as fit *Nurseries* to
Videl. 47. plant and breed up treasonable and re-
ff. tit. 22. bellious *designs*, and therefore frequent-
de colleg. ly forbad them under very *severe* Penal-
& corporib. ties. Thus *Julius Caesar*, who first laid
Sueton. in the Foundation of the Empire, reduced
vit. Jul. these *Colledges* to the ancient Standard,
Cas. c. 42. putting down all that were *supernumera-*
p. 50. in ry and *illegal*; wherein he was also fol-
Aug. c. 32. lowed by his Successor *Augustus*; and
p. 155. the succeeding Emperours very often
 put out strict *Edicts* against them, pro-
 hibiting them as dangerous and unlaw-
 ful Combinations.

Under the Notions of these *societies* it
 was, that the *Christian* Congregations
 came to be forbidden; several persons
 confederated into a Combination, and
 constantly meeting at a common Feast
 rendring them suspicious to their E-
 nemies. Hence *Pliny* giving the Em-
 peror an account of the *Christians*,
 and especially of their assembling at
 their solemn Feasts of Love, tells him,
 That they had forborn ever since, ac-
 cording to his Command, he had pub-
 lished an *Edict* to forbid the *Heteriæ* or
Societies. And indeed the *Christian*
 Assemblies, whereat they usually had
 the *Lords Supper*, and their *Love Feasts*
 look.

Lid. 10.
ep. 97.

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looking somewhat like those *illegal* Part 3. Meetings, (especially as beheld with the eye of an *enemy*) it was the less wonder, if the Heathens accused them of hatching Treason, and the Magistrates proceeded against them as Contemners and Violators of the Law.

But to this the *Christians* answered, Tert. Apol. c. 38. p. 30. That their *Meetings* could not be accounted amongst the *unlawful Factions*, having nothing common with them; that indeed the Wisdom and Providence of the State had justly prohibited such Factions to prevent Seditions, which might thence easily over-run and disquiet all Councils, Courts, Pleadings, and all Meetings whatsoever. But no such thing could be suspected of the *Christian Assemblies*, who were frozen as to any *ambitious designs* of Honour or Dignity, strangers to nothing more than publick Affairs, and had renounced all pretences to *external pomps* and pleasures: that if the *Christian Assemblies* were like others, there would Id. c. 39. p. 32. be some reason to condemn them under the Notion of Factions; but to whose prejudice (say they) did we ever *meet* together? We are the same when *together*, that we are when *asunder*;

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Part 3. *der*; the same *united*, as is every single person, hurting no man, grieving no man; and therefore that when such Honest, Good, Pious, and Chaste Men met together, it was rather to be called a

Cons. Cels. Council than a *Faction*. To which *Ori-*
Lib. 5. *gen* adds, That seeing in all their Meetings they sought nothing but Truth, they could not be said to conspire against the *Laws*, seeing they designed nothing but to get from under the power and tyranny of the *Devil*; who had procured those *Laws* only to establish his Empire faster in the World. For

Lib. 3. elsewhere he bids *Celsus*, or any of his
P. 115. Party shew any thing that was *seditions* amongst the *Christians*: that their Religion arose not at first (as he falsely charg'd it) out of Sedition, might appear in that their *Legislator* had so severely forbidden Killing and Murder, and that the *Christians* would never have entertained such mild *Laws*, as gave their Enemies opportunities to kill them like Sheep delivered to the slaughter, without making the least resistance. Thus *Arnobius* confidently challenges the *Heathens* whether they could reject *Christianity* upon the account of its raising Wars, Tumults, and

Se-

Adv. Gent.
1. 2. p. 20.

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Seditions in the World. No, those Part 3.

were things which they may find nearer home. You *defame* us (says *Ter-* *Ad Scap.*
tullian) with Treason against the *Empe-* *c. 2. p. 69.*

roure, and yet never could any *Albinians*,
Nigrians, or *Cassians*, (persons that had
mutinied and rebelled against the Em-
perours) be found amongst the *Christi-*
ans; they are those that swear by the
Emperours' *Genii*, that have offered Sa-
crifices for their safety, that have often
condemned Christians; these are the
men that are found Traytors to the *Em-*
perours. A Christian is *no* mans Ene-
my, much less his *Princes*; knowing him
to be constituted by God, he cannot
but love, revere, and honor him, and
desire that he and the whole *Roman*
Empire may be safe, as long as the
World lasts. We worship the *Empe-*
roure, as much as is either *lawful* or *ex-*
pedient, as one that is next to God;
we *sacrifice* for his safety, but 'tis to
his and our God; and so as he has
commanded, *only* by Holy Prayer; for
the great God needs no Blood or sweet
Perfumes, these are the *Banquets* and
repast of *Devils*, which we do not only
reject, but *expel* at every turn. But to
say more concerning this, were to light

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Part 3. a candle to the Sun. Julian the Emperor (though no good friend to *Christians*, yet) thus far does them right, that if they see any one *mutinying* against his Prince, they presently *punish* him with great Severities.

Πάντων
τις εἰς τὸν
Βασιλέα
ἐπίδωκεν
ἀτακτῶν-
τας τινάς,
αὐτῶν
μάλιστά
λαλοῦσιν.
Julian.
Fragm.
Ep. Oper.
c. i. p. 528.

And here we may with just reason reflect upon the Iniquity of the Church of Rome, which in this instance of Religion has so abominably debauch'd the Purity and Simplicity of the *Christian* Faith. For they not only exempt the *Clergy* (where they can) from the Authority and Judgment of the *secular* Powers, whereby Horrible Enormities do arise, but generally teach, that a Prince once *excommunicate*, his Subjects are absolv'd from all Fealty and Allegiance, and he may with impunity be deposed or made away. How shall such a Prince be thundred against with Curses and Deprivations, every bold and treacherous *Priest* be authorized to brand his Sacred Person with the odious Names of *Infidel*, *Heretick* and *Apostate*, and be *Apostolically* licensed to slander and *belibel* him, and furnished with Commissions to free his Subjects from their Duty and Allegiance, and to *allure* them to take up Arms against him? And if these

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these courses fail, and men still continue Part 3.

Loyal, they have Disciples ready by *secret* or *sudden* Arts to send him out of the world. And if any mans conscience be so nice as to boggle at it, his scruples shall be removed, at worst it shall pass for a *venial* Crime, and the *Pope* perhaps (with the help of a Limitation that it be done for the interest of the *Catholick* Cause) by his *Omnipotence* shall create it Meritorious.

Cardinal Bellarmine (whose Wit and Learning were employed to uphold a tottering Cause) maintains it stiffly, and in exprefs terms, that if a *King* be an *Heretick* or an *Infidel*, (and we know what they mean by that, nay he particularly names the *reformed* Princes of *England* amongst his Instances) and seeks to draw his Dominions unto his Sect; It is not onely *lawful*, but *necessary*, to deprive him of his Kingdom. And although he knew that the whole course of Antiquity would fly in the face of so *bold* an assertion, yet he goes on to assert, that the reason why the *Primitive Christians* did not attempt this upon *Nero*, *Dioclesian*, *Julian* the Apostate, and the like, was not out of *conscience*, or that they boggled out of

De Rom.
Pont. l. 5. c.
7. col. 891.

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Part 3. a sense of Duty, but because they wanted *means* and power to effect it. A bold piece of Falshood this, and how contrary to the plain and positive Laws of *Christ*, to the meek and *primitive* Spirit of the Gospel! But by the *Cardinals* leave, it could not be for want
Ep. 4. p. 9. of Power; for if (as *Seneca* observes) he may be *master* of any mans Life that *undervalues* his own, it was then as easie for a *Christian* to have slain *Nero* or *Dioclesian*, as it was of later times for *Gerard* to pistol the Prince of *Orange*, or *Ravillac* to stab the King of *France*. Nay, take one of his own *Instances*, *Julian* the *Apostate*, a Prince bad enough and that left no Method unattempted to seduce his Subjects to *Paganism* and *Idolatry*, yet though the greatest part of his Army were Christians, they never so much as whispered a treasonable Design against him, using no other *arms* (as we noted out of *Nazi-anzen*) but *Prayers* and *Tears*. Had *S. Paul* been of their mind, he would have told the Christian *Romans* quite another story, and instead of bidding them be subject to *Nero*, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*, would have instructed them to take all opportunities

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tunities to have murdered or deposed Part 3.
him. But I shall not reckon up the Villanies they have been guilty of in this kind nor pursue the odious and pernicious Consequences of their Doctrine and Practise. Thus much I could not but take notice of, being so immediately opposite to the whole tenor of the Gospel, and so great a scandal to Christianity. And I verily believe, that had the Primitive Christians been no better *Subjects* than their *Emperours* were *Princes*, had they practised on them those bloody Artifices which have been common amongst those that call themselves the only *Catholicks*, that barbarous dealing would have been a greater curb to the flourishing of the Gospel, than all the *ten* Persecutions. For how could an Impartial *Heathen* ever have believed their Doctrine to have been of God, had their Actions been so contrary to all Principles of Natural Divinity? Sure I am, *Pagan Rome* was in this case more *orthodox*, and their *Pontifices* far better *Doctōrs of Divinity*. Their *Lex Julia* (as *Ulpian* their great Lawyer tells us) allotted the same Penalty to *sacrilege* and *treason*; placing the one the very next
step

Lib. 7. de
Offic. Pro-
conf. in
l. 1. ff. ad
leg. Jul.
maj.

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Part 3. step to the other; thereby teaching us that they looked upon Treason against the Prince as an Affront next to that which was immediately done *against* the Majesty of Heaven. And *Marcellus* the great Statesman in *Tacitus* lays it down for a *Maxim*, That *Subjects may wish for good Princes, but ought to bear with any.* And shame it is, that any should call themselves *Christians*, and yet be found worse than they, their Principles and Practises more opposite to the known Laws of God and Nature, more destructive to the Peace and Welfare of Mankind.

*Hist. l. 4.
c. 8. p. 489.*

C H A P. V.

Of their Penance, and the Discipline of the Ancient Church.

This why last treated of. The Church as a Society founded by Christ has its distinct Laws and Privileges. What the usual Offences that came under the Churches Discipline. All Immorality open or confessed. Lapsing into Idolatry the great sin of those Times. How many ways usually committed. The Traditores who, and their Crime.
What

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What penalties inflicted upon delinquent persons. Delivering over to Satan, what. This extraordinary coercive Power, why vested in the Church. The common and standing Penalty by Excommunication. This practised among the ancient Gauls. An account of it out of Cæsar. In use amongst the Jews. Thence derived to the Christians. This punishment, how expressed by Church Writers. Managed according to the nature of the fault. The rigor of it sometimes mitigated. Delinquent Clergy-men degraded, and never admitted but to Lay-communion. Instances of it. An account of the rise of Novatianism, and the Severity of its Principles. Styl'd Cathari. Condemned by the Synod at Rome. Offenders in what manner dealt with. The Procedure of the action described by Tertullian. Penitents how behaving themselves during their Suspension. The greatest not spar'd. The Case of Philippus and Theodosius. This severity why used. Penances called Satisfaction, and why. The use of the word [Satisfaction] in the ancient Fathers. Penitents how absolved. After what time. In the power of Bishops to extend or shorten these Penitentiary Humiliations. Four particu-
Z lar

Part 3. *lar caces observed, wherein the time of Penance might be shortened. In what sence Communion is denied by some ancient Canons to Penitents at the hour of Death. This Discipline administered primarily by Bishops. By his leave Presbyters and (in necessity) Deacons might absolve. The publick Penitentiary when, and why instituted; when and why laid aside. Penitents taken into Communion by Martyrs and Confessors. This power abused to excess. Cyprians complaint of the excessive numbers of Libels of Peace granted by the Martyrs to the lapsed without the knowledge of the Bishop. The form of these Pacifick Libels exemplified out of Cyprian. Other sorts of Libells. The Libellatici, who. Thurificati. Several sorts of Libellatici. The Libellatici properly so called. Their manner of Address to the Heathen Magistrate to procure their exemption from sacrificing. That they did not privately deny Christ; proved against Baronius. The Piety and Purity of the Primitive Church, matter of just admiration.*

HAVING travelled through the several stages of the Subject I had undertaken, I should here have ended my journey, but that there is one thing yet remains, which was not properly reducible under any particular Head, being of a general relation to the whole; and that is to consider what Discipline was used towards Offenders in the ancient Church, only premising this, that the *Christian Church* being founded and established by *Christ* as a *Society* and *Corporation*, distinct from that of the *Commonwealth*, is by the very nature of its Constitution (besides what positive ground and warrant there may be for it in *Scripture*) invested with an inherent Power (besides what is borrowed from the *Civil Magistrate*) of censuring and punishing its Members that offend against the Laws of it, and this in order to the maintaining its peace and purity. for without such a fundamental power as this, 'tis impossible that as a Society it should be able to subsist, the very nature of a Community necessarily implying such a Right inherent in it. Now for the better understanding what this Power was, and how exercised in the

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Part 3. first ages of the *Church*, we shall consider these four things ; what were the usual *crimes* that came under the *Discipline* of the ancient Church ; what *penalties* were inflicted upon delinquent persons ; in what *manner* Offenders were dealt with ; and by *whom* this Discipline was administred.

First, What the usual *crimes* and *offences* were which came under the Discipline of the Ancient Church. In the general they were any offences against the *Christian* Law, any vice or *immorality* that was either *publick* in it self, or made known, and made good to the Church. For the holy and good *Christians* of those times were *infinitely* careful to keep the Honor of their Religion unspotted, to stifle every sin in its birth, and by bringing *offenders* to publick shame and penalty, to keep them from propagating the malignant influence of a bad Example. For this reason they watched over one another, told them *privately* of their *faults* and failures and (when that would not do) brought them before the *cognizance* of the Church. 'Tis needless to reckon up particular Crimes, when none were spar'd. Only because in those days (by reason of the violent heats of Persecution) the great

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great *temptation* which the *weaker* and Part 3^r more unsettled Christians were exposed to, was to *deny* their Profession, and to offer *sacrifice* to the Heathen Gods; therefore lapsing into *Idolatry* was the most common sin that came before them, and of this they had very frequent Instances, it being that which for some Ages mainly exercised the Discipline of the Church. This sin of Idolatry or denying *Christ* in those times was usually committed these three ways: Sometimes by exposing the *Scriptures* to the rage and malice of their Enemies, which was accounted a virtual renouncing Christianity, This was especially remarkable under the *Dioclesian* persecution in the *African Churches*. For *Dioclesian* had put forth an *Edict* that *Christians* should deliver up their *Scriptures* and the Writings of the Church to be burnt. This Command was prosecuted with great rigour and fierceness, and many Christians to avoid the storm delivered up their Bibles to the scorn and fury of their Enemies. Hence they were styled *Traditores*, (of whom there is frequent mention in *Optatus* and *S. Augustine*) with whom the *Orthodox* refusing to joyn after the Persecution was over, the difference

Part 3. rence broke out into Schism and Faction, and gave birth to that unhappy Sect of the *Donatists*, which so much exercised the Christian Church. Otherwhiles Christians became guilty of Idolatry by *actual* sacrificing or worshipping Idols; these were called *Thurificati*, from their burning *Incense* upon the Altars of the Heathen Deities, and were the grossest and vilest sort of *Idolaters*. Others again fell into this sin by basely corrupting the Heathen Magistrate, and purchasing a *warrant* of security from him, to exempt them from the penalty of the Law, and the necessity of sacrificing and denying *Christ*: these were called *Libellatici*, of whom we shall speak more afterwards.

Secondly, What *penalties* and punishments were inflicted upon delinquent persons, and they could be no other than such as were agreeable to the Nature and Constitution of the Church, which as it transacts only in *spiritual* matters, so it could inflict no other than *spiritual* censures and chastisements. 'Tis true indeed, that in the first Age especially, the *Apostles* had a power to inflict *bodily* Punishments upon Offenders, which they sometimes made use of upon great occasions, as *S. Peter* did towards

Ana-

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Ananias and Saphira, striking them dead Part 3.

upon the place for their notorious couzenage and gross hypocrisie. And *S. Paul* punished *Elymas* with blindness for his perverse and malicious opposition of the Gospel; and this doubtless he primarily intends by his *delivering over persons unto Satan*; for no sooner were they excommunicated and cut off from the body of the Faithful, but *Satan*, as the common *Serjeant* and Jaylor seized upon them, and either by actual possessing, or some other sign upon their Bodies, made it appear that they were deliver'd over into his Power. This could not but strike a mighty terror into men, and make them stand in awe of the *censures* of the Church; and questionless the main design of the Divine Providence in affording this *extraordinary* gift, was to supply the Defect of civil and coercive power, of which the Church was then wholly destitute, and therefore needed some more than *ordinary* assistance, especially at its first Constitution, some visible and *sensible* punishments, to keep its Sentence and *Determinations* from being slighted by bold and contumacious Offenders. How long this miraculous Power lasted in the Church I know not, or whether at

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Part 3. All beyond the Apostles Age. the common and standing *penalty* they made use of was *Excommunication* or Suspension from Communion with the Church; the *cutting off* and casting out an offending person as a *rotten* and infected member, till by Repentance and wholesom discipline he was *cured* and restored, and then he was re-admitted into Church-society and to a participation of the Ordinances and Privileges of Christianity.

De Bell.
Gall. l. 6.
p. 135.

This way of punishing by Excommunication was not originally instituted by our *Lord* or his Apostles, but had been anciently practised both amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*. 'Twas commonly practised by the *Druides*, (as *Cæsar*, who lived amongst them informes us) who, when any of the people became irregular and disorderly, presently *suspended* them from their sacrifices. And the persons thus suspended were accounted in the number of the most *impious* and *execrable* persons. All men stood off from them, *shunn'd* their company and converse as an *infection* and a plague: they had no benefit of *Law*, nor any *Honour* or respect shewn unto them; and of all *punishments* this they accounted most *extreme* and severe. So far he; giving

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ving an account of this Discipline a- Part 3.
mongst the ancient *Gauls*. In the *Jewish*
Church nothing was more *familiar*; their
three famous degrees of *Excommunication*,
נדר *Niddui*, *חרם* *Cherem*, *שמטה*
Shammatha, are so commonly known,
that 'twere impertinent to insist upon
them. From the usage of the *Jewish* it
was amongst other Rites adopted into
the *Christian Church*, practised by the
Apostles, and the Churches founded by
them, (whereof we have instances in the
New Testament) but brought to greater
perfection in succeeding times. 'Twas *va-*
riously expressed by the ancient Writers,
though much to the same purpose. Such
persons are said *Abstineri*, to be kept
back, a word much used by *Cyprian* and
the *Synod of Illiberis*; ἀφορίζεσθαι, to be
separated, or to be separated from the bo-
dy of *Christ*, as *S. Augustine* oft expresses
it, ἐκκληΐσεως τῆς κοινωνίας παντὶ πασι to
be *wholly cut off* from Communion, as *Can. 28.*
'tis in the *Apostolick Canons*. Sometimes *Can. 28.*
ἐκκληΐσεως ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, as the *Laodicean*
Synod calls it, to be *thrown out* of the *Epist. ad*
Church. to be *anathematiz'd*, and with- *Armen. E-*
out the Communion and Pale of the *pisc. pre-*
Church, as the Fathers of the Council *fix. Conc.*
of *Gangra* have it. *Gangr.*

This

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Part 3. This suspension and the Penance that accompanied it was greater or less, longer or shorter, according to the nature of the Crime, sometimes two, three, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty years, and sometimes for the whole life; nay, in some cases it was not taken off at death, but persons were left to the Judgment of God, without any *testimony* of their Reconciliation to the Church. Though herein the severity was mitigated, not only by private Bishops, but by the great Council of *Nice*, which ordain'd, that penitent persons should not be denied the Communion at the hour of Death. Of all which Cases, or the most material of them, we have in the foregoing discourse produc'd particular Instances in their proper places. If the person offending happened to be in *Orders*, he forfeited his Ministry; and though upon his Repentance he was restored to Communion, yet it was only as a *Lay-person*, never recovering the honor and Dignity of his Office. Thus *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome* giving *Fabius* of *Antioch* an account of the *Clanular* and *Schismatical* Ordination of *Novatian*, tells him, that one of the Bishops that ordain'd him return'd after to the Church, with tears be-

*Apud Euf.
Hist. Eccl.
L. 6. c. 43.
p. 243.*

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bewailing his offence; whom at the in- Part 3.
 stance of the people he received into *lay*
communion. The same Cyprian writing
 about this very case, relates of *Trophimus* Epist. 52:
 p. 69.
 (who was either the very Bishop menti-
 oned by *Cornelius*, or one of his Col-
 leagues) that returning to the Church
 with great demonstrations of Repent-
 ance he was re-admitted, but no other-
 wise than in the capacity of a Lay-man.
 And speaking elsewhere of *Basiliides* his Epist. 68.
 p. 114.
 Repentance, he tells us, he had no
 thoughts of retaining his *Bishoprick*, ma-
 king account he was very well dealt
 with, if upon his repentance he might
 but communicate as a *Laick*, and be re-
 ceived amongst the number of the *faith-*
ful. This S. *Basil* tells us was an ancient Epist. Can.
 ad Amphil.
 Can. 3.
 p. 22. Vide
 Zonar. &
 Balsam. in
 Can. 10.
 Cont. Nic.
Canon and Practise of the Church, and
 accordingly ordains, that a *Deacon* guil-
 ty of Fornication should be deposed
 from his Office, and being thrust down
 into the rank of the Laity, should in that
 quality be admitted to Communion.

Indeed they strove by all ways ima-
 ginable to *discourage* sin, never thinking
 the Curb strong enough, so they might
 but keep persons within the bounds of
 Order and Regularity; insomuch that
 by some the string was stretched too far,
 and

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Part 3. and all pardon denied to them that had sin'd. This uncomfortable Doctrine was if not first *coin'd*, yet mainly *vended* by the *Novatian* Party. For *Novatus*, S. *Cyprian's* Presbyter, being suspended by him for his vile Enormities fled over to *Rome* and there joyn'd himself to *Novatian* a presbyter of that Church (these two Names are frequently confounded by the *Greek* writers) who ambitiously sought to make himself Bishop, and to thrust out *Cornelius* newly elected into that See; but not being able to compass his design, between them they started this amongst other *heretical* Opinions, That the Lapsed (who through fear of Suffering had fallen in the time of Persecution) were not to be admitted to repentance, and that though they should never so oft confess their sins, and never so sincerely forsake them, yet there was no hope of salvation for them, at leastwise (for so I incline to understand them) that it was not in the power of the Church to absolve or give them any hopes of pardon, leaving them to the judgment of God; styling themselves (and not onely as *Balsamon* affirms, ironically styl'd by others) by the Name of *Cathari*, the pure and undefiled Party.

But

Enf. uoi
supr. p. 242.
Epiph. i. c. 59.
contra
Catharos
p. 214.

In Can. 8.
Conc. Nic.

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But they were herein presently condemned by a *Synod* of sixty Bishops, and more than as many Presbyters and Deacons gathered at *Rome* (and the Decree consented to and published by the rest of the Bishops in their several *provinces*) concluding that *Novatus* and his party, and all that had subscribed to his most *inhumane* and merciless Opinion, should be cast out of the Church; and that the Brethren who in that sad Calamity had fallen from their Profession, should be healed and restored by the arts and methods of repentance. Which brings us to consider,

Thirdly, How and in what manner Offenders were dealt with, both as to their *suspension* and *penance*, and as to their *absolution*. This Affair was usually managed after this order; at their publick Assemblies (as we find in *Tertullian*) amongst other parts of their holy Exercises, there were Exhortations, Reproofs, and a *divine censure*; for the judgment is given with great weight, as amongst those that are sure that God beholds what they do; and this is one of the highest *præludiums* and forerunners of the *judgment* to come, when the delinquent person is banished from the Com-

Ap. c. 39.
p. 31.

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Part 3. *munion* of *Prayers*, *Assemblies*, and all holy *Commerce*. By this passage we clearly see, that the first thing in this solemn action, was to make *reproofs* and *exhortations*, thereby to bring the Offender to the sight and acknowledgment of his Faults; then the *sentence* or *censure* was passed upon him, whereby he was suspended not only from the Communion of the Holy *Eucharist*, but from all holy commerce in any (especially *publick*) Duty of Religion. We cannot imagine, that in every person that stood under this Capacity, a formal Sentence was always denounced against him, it being many times sufficient, that the fact he had done was evident and *notorious*, as in the case of the *lapsed* that had offered Sacrifice, for in this case the Offender was look'd upon as *ipso facto* excommunicate, and all Religious *Commerce* forbore towards him. 'Tis true, that in some cases the *Martyrs* (as we shall see more anon) finding such *lapsed* persons truly penitent did receive them into *private* Communion, so did those *Martyrs* *Dionysius Alexandrinus* speak of in his Letter to *Fabius* Bishop of *Antioch*, they took the Penitents that had fallen into Idolatry into their company, and communicated

Enf. Hist.

Eccl. l. 6 c.

42. p. 241.

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municated with them both at *Prayers* Part 3. and *Meals*; but to *publick* Communion they were never admitted till they had exactly fulfilled the Discipline of the Church which principally consisted in many severe acts of Repentance and Mortification, more or less according to the nature of the Offence.

During this space of *Penance* they appeared in all the Formalities of Sorrow and Mourning, in a sordid and squalid Habit, with a sad Countenance, and a Head hung down, with Tears in their eyes, standing without at the *Church doors*, (for they were not suffer'd to enter in) falling down upon their knees to the Ministers as they went in, and begging the Prayers of all good Christians for themselves, with all the Expressions and Demonstrations of a sorrowful and dejected mind, reckoning the *lower* they lay in repentance, the higher it would exalt them; the more sordid they appeared, the more they should be cleansed and purified; the less they spared themselves, the more God would spare them. At these times also they made open *confession* of their Faults, this being accounted the very spring of Repentance, and without which they concluded

*Tert. de
pœnitent.
c. 9. p. 127.
Vide Euf.
l. 5. c. 28.
p. 197.*

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Part 3. ded it could not be real; *Out of confession* (says *Tertullian*) *is born repentance, and by repentance God is pacified.* And therefore without this neither riches nor honor would procure any admission into the Church. Thus *Eusebius* reports, that when *Philippus* the Emperor would have gone in with the rest of the *Christians* upon *Easter Eve*, to have partaked of the Prayers of the Church, the Bishop of the place would by no means suffer it, unless he first made *Confession* of his sins, and passed through the order of the *Penitents*, being guilty of very great and enormous sins; which 'tis said he very willingly submitted to, testifying by his actions his real and religious fear of the Divine Majesty. This story, though as to the main of it, it might be true, yet as fastened upon *Philip* the Emperor, I have formerly shewed it to be false, and that its rather meant of one *Philippus*, who was Governor in *Egypt*, and professed himself a *Christian*; but however this was, 'tis certain that a person as great as he, *Theodosius the Great*, for his bloody and barbarous slaughter of the *Thessalonians*, was by *S. Ambrose* Bishop of *Milan* suspended, brought to publick *Confession*, and forced to under-

Ibid.

Jo. l. 6.

6. 34.

p. 232.

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go a severe course of penance for eight Part 3.
months together; when after great demonstrations of a hearty sorrow and sincere Repentance, not more rigidly imposed upon him, than readily and willingly received by him, after his usual Prostrations in the Church, (as if unworthy either to stand or kneel) crying out in the words of *David*, *My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word*; after having oft torn his hair, beat his forehead, water'd his cheeks with tears, and humbly beg'd peace and pardon, he was absolved, and restored to Communion with the Church; of which passage they who would know more *Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 15.* may find the story largely related by *Theodoret*.

This Severity was used towards Offenders, partly to make them more sensible of their sins, partly to affright and deter others, but principally to give *satisfaction* both to God and his Church concerning the reality and sincerity of their Repentance. Hence it is that these *Penances* in the writings of those times are so often called *satisfactions*; for when ever those Fathers use the word, 'tis either with respect to *Men* or *God*; if to *Men*, then the meaning is, that by these

A a

exter-

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Part 3. external acts of Sorrow and Mortification they *satisfie* the church of their Repentance, and make reparation for those offences and scandals which they had given by their sins: if to God, then 'tis taken for the *acknowledgment* of a mans fault, and the begging of pardon and remission. Thus Cyprian speaking of the state of impenitent sinners, aggravates it by this, that they do *peccare, nec satisfacere*, sin, but make no satisfaction; *i. e.* (as in the very next words he explains it) they do not *peccata deslere*, confess and bewail their sins. And before, discoursing about Gods being the onely object of tears and sorrow for sin, which is to be addressed to God and not man, he tells us, 'tis God that is to be appeased by satisfaction, that he being greatly offended is to be intreated by a long and full Repentance, as being alone able to pardon those sins that are committed against him. So that the satisfaction which they reckon'd they made to God consisted in seeking to avert his displeasure, and to regain his forfeited favour by a deep contrition and sorrow for sin, by a real acknowledgment and *forsaking* of their faults, and by an humble giving to God the glory both of his Mercy and his

Aug. En-
chirid. c.
65. tom. 3.

Is. p. 173.

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his justice. Thence Confession is called by *Tertullian* the *counsel* or intention of Satisfaction. And a little after he describes it thus; *Confession* (says he) is that whereby we acknowledge our offence to God, not as if he were ignorant of it, but in as much as by confession satisfaction is forwarded, by confession repentance is produced, and by repentance God is appeased. The same both he, *Cyprian*, and others, frequently use in the same sense; which I note the rather because of that absurd and *impious doctrine*, so current amongst the *papists*, and which they pretended to derive from these very fathers, that by works of penance compensation is made to God for the debt of punishment that was contracted, whereby at least the temporal penalties due to sin are *meritoriously* expiated and done away. But this, besides that it is flatly repugnant to the Doctrine of *Antiquity*, how much 'tis derogatory to the honour of Divine Grace, and the *infinite* satisfaction of the Son of God, I shall not now stand to dispute. To return therefore: This term of Penance was usually exacted with great rigor, and seldom dispensed with, no indulgence or admission being granted till the full time was completed.

Part 3.
Text. de penitent. c. 8.
p. 126, 127.

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Part 3. Therefore *Cyprian* smartly chides with *Ep. 9. p. 21.* some *Presbyters*, who had taken upon them to absolve the Lapsed before their time; and that whereas in lesser offences men were obliged to the just time of Penance, and to observe the order of Discipline, they in a crime of so heinous a nature had hand over head admitted them to communion before they had gone through their penance and Confession, and fulfilled the regular customs and Orders of the Church.

Cyp. ep. 11. p. 24. The time of Penance being ended, they addressed themselves to the Governour of the Church for *Absolution*, here-upon their Repentance was taken into examination, and being found to be sincere and real, they were *openly* re-admitted into the church by the imposition of the Hands of the Clergy, the Party to be *absolved* kneeling down between the knees of the *Bishop*, or in his absence of the *Presbyter*, who laying his hand upon his Head solemnly blessed and absolved him; whence doubtless sprang that absurd and senseless Calumny which the *Heathens* laid upon the *Christians*, that they were wont *Sacerdotis colere genitalia*; so forward were they to catch at any Reproach which the most crooked and

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and malicious invention could insinuate Part 3.
and suggest. The Penitent being absolved, was received with the universal joy and acclamation of the people, as one returned from the state of the *dead*, (for such 'tis plain they accounted 'em while under a state of guilt, especially the lapsed, as *Cyprian* positively affirms them to be) being embraced by his Brethren, who blessed God for his return, and many times wept for the joy of his recovery, who upon his absolution was now restored to a Participation of the *Lords Supper*, and to all other acts of church-Communion, which by his Crimes he had forfeited, and from which he had been suspended, till he had given satisfactory evidence of his Repentance, and purpose to persevere under the exact Discipline of Christianity. This was the ordinary way wherein they treated *criminals* in the primitive Church; but in cases of necessity, (such as that of Danger of Death) they did not rigidly exact the set time of Penance, but absolved the person, that so he might die in the Peace and Communion of the church. The story of *Serapion* at *Alexandria* we have formerly mentioned, who being suddenly surpris'd with

Id. Epist.
27. p. 39.
Vide epist.
46. p. 60.

Enf. Hist.
Eccles. l. 6. c.
44. p. 246.

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Part 3. death while he was under the state of Penance, and not being able to die till he had received Absolution, sent for the Presbyter to testifie his Repentance and absolve him; but he being also at that time sick, sent him a part of the *consecrated* Elements which he had by him; upon the receiving whereof he breathed out his Soul with great comfort and satisfaction, that he now died in Communion with the Church.

The truth is, the time of these *Penitentiary* Humiliation often varied according to the circumstances of the case, it being much in the power of the Bishops and Governors of the Church to shorten the time, and sooner to absolve and take them into Communion, the *medicinal* vertue of Repentance, lying not in the *duration*, but the *manner* of it, as *S. Basil* speaks in this very case. A learned man has observed to my hand four particular *cases* wherein they were wont to anticipate the usual time of *Absolution*: the first was, (what I observed but now) when persons were in danger of death; this was agreed to by *Cyprian*, and the Martyrs, and the *Roman* Clergy, and the Letters (as he tells us) sent through the whole World to all the Church.

*Can. 2. ad
Amphil.*

*Forbes. in-
struct. Hist.
Th. l. 12.
c. 7. p. 674.*

*Ep. 52. ad
Antonian.
p. 67.*

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Churches! This also was provided for Part 3. by the great Council of Nice, That as ^{Can. 13.} for those that were at the *point* of death, the *ancient* and *canonical* Rule should be observed still, that when any were at the point of death, they should by no means be deprived of the last and necessary *viaticum*, i. e. the Holy Sacrament, which was the great *symbol* of Communion. And here for the better understanding some passages, it may not be unuseful once for all to add this Note, That whereas many of the ancient *Cannons* (of the *Illiberine* Council especially) positively deny Communion to some sorts of Penitents even at the *hour* of death, they are not to be understood, as if the Church mercileſſy denied all *Indulgence* and *Absolution* to any Penitent at ſuch a time, but only that it was thought fit to deny them the uſe of the *Eucharist*, which was the great *pledge* and testimony of their *Communion* with the Church.

The ſecond caſe was in time of *eminent* Perſecution, conceiving it but fit at ſuch times to diſpenſe with the rigor of the Diſcipline, that ſo *Penitents* being received to the *grace* of Chriſt, and to the Communion of the Church, might

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Part 3. be the better armed and enabled *to contend earnestly for the Faith*. This was resolved and agreed upon by *Cyprian* and a whole Council of *African* Bishops, whereof they give an *account* to *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, that in regard *Persecution* was drawing on, they held it convenient and necessary, that *Communion* and *Reconciliation* should be granted to the *lapsed*, not only to those that were a *dying*, but even to the *living*, that they might not be left naked and unarmed in the time of battel, but be able to defend themselves with the shield of *Christs* Body and Blood. For how (say they) shall we teach and persuade them to shed *their* blood in the *cause* of *Christ*, if we deny them the benefit of his Blood? How shall we make them fit to drink the *cup* of *Martyrdom*, unless we first admit them in the Church to a right of *Communication* to drink of the *cup* of the Blood of *Christ*? A third Case wherein they relaxed the Severity of this *discipline* was, when great *multitudes* were concerned, or such *persons* as were likely to draw great Numbers after them; in this case they thought it *prudent* and reasonable to deal with persons by somewhat milder and gentler methods,

Ep. 54.

p. 76.

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rhods, lest by holding them to terms of Part 3. Rigor and Austerity, they should provoke them to fly off either to *Heathens* or to *Hereticks*. This course *Cyprian* tells us he took, he complied with the necessity of the times, and like a wise Physician yielded a little to the Humour of the Patient, to provide for his health, and to cure his wounds; and quotes herein the Example of *Cornelius* of *Rome*, who dealt just so with *Trophimus* and his Party; and elsewhere, that out of an earnest desire to regain and resettle the Brethren, he was ready to connive at many things, and to forgive any thing, and did not examine and exact the greatest Crimes with that full Power and Severity that he might; insomuch that he thought he did almost offend himself in an over-liberal remitting other mens offences. Lastly, in absolving Penitents, and mitigating the rigors of their Repentance, they used to have respect to the person of the Penitent, to his dignity, or age or infirmity, or the course of his past life; sometimes to the greatness of his humility, and the impression which his present condition made upon him. Thus the *Ancyran* Council impowers Bishops to examine the manner of mens Conversion

Ep. 52. ubi prius.

Ep. 55. p. 85.

Can. 5 Vide Conc. Nic. Can. 12.

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Part 3. sion and Repentance, and accordingly either to moderate or *enlarge* their time of Penance, but especially that regard be had to their Conversation both before and since their *Offence*, that so Clemency and *Indulgence* may be extended to them. So for the case of persons of more than ordinary *rank and dignity*, or of a more tender and delicate *constitution*, *Chrysostom* determines, that in chastising and punishing their Offences they be dealt with in a more peculiar manner than other men, lest by holding them under over-rigorous Penalties they should be tempted to fly out into despair, and so throwing off the Reins of Modesty, and the Care of their own Happiness and Salvation, should run headlong into all manner of Vice and Wickedness. So wisely did the Prudence and Piety of those times deal with Offenders, neither letting the Reins so loose as to patronize *presumption*, or encourage any man to sin, nor yet holding them so streight as to drive men into *despair*.

De sacer-
dot. l. 2. c. 4.
p. 18. tom. 4.

The fourth and last *Circumstance* concerns the *persons* by whom this *Discipline* was administred: now though 'tis true, that this Affair was managed in the *publick*

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lick Congregation, and seldom or never Part 3.
done without the *consent* and approba-
tion of the People, (as *Cyprian* more
than once and again expressly tells us)
yet was it ever accounted a *ministerial*
act, and properly belonged to them.
Tertullian speaking of Church Censures Apol. c. 39.
adds, That the *Elders* that are approv'd,
and have attain'd that Honor, not by
Purchase but Testimony, *preside* therein.
And *Firmilian* Bishop of *Cæsarea Cappa-*
docia in a Letter to S. *Cyprian*, speaking Inter epist.
Cyp. p. 146.
of the *Majores natu*, the *Seniors* that pre-
side in the Church, tells us, that to them
belongs the power of *Baptizing*, *Imposing*
Hands, (*viz.* in Penance and *Ordinati-*
on.) By the Bishop it was primarily and
usually administred, the *determining* the
time and manner of repentance, and the
conferring Pardon upon the penitent
sinner, being Acts of the *highest* Power
and Jurisdiction, and therefore reckon'd
to appertain to the *highest* Order in the
Church. Therefore 'tis provided by
the *Illiberine* Council, that Penance shall Can. 32.
be prescribed by none but the *Bishop*; p. 40.
only in case of necessity, such as Sick-
ness and Danger of Death, by leave and
command from the Bishop, the *Presbyter*
or *Deacon* might impose *penance* and ab-
solve.

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Part 3. solve. Accordingly we find *Cyprian* amongst other Directions to his Clergy how to carry themselves towards the Lapsed, giving them this, that if any were overtaken with sickness or present danger, they should not stay for his coming, but the sick Person should make Confession of his sins to the next *Presbyter*, or (if a *Presbyter* could not be met with) to a *Deacon*, that so laying hands upon him he might depart in the peace of the Church.

Epist. 12.
p. 25. Vid.
Conc. 2.
Carthag.
Can. 4.

But though while the number of *Christians* were small, and the bounds of *Particular Churches* little, *Bishops* were able to manage these and other parts of their Office in their own persons, yet soon after the task began to grow too great for them; and therefore about the time of the *Decian* Persecution, when *Christians* were very much multiplied, and the number of the Lapsed great, it seemed good to the Prudence of the Church, partly for the ease of the *Bishop*, and partly to provide for the modesty of persons in being brought before the whole Church to confess every crime, to appoint a *publick penitentiary*, (some holy, grave, and prudent *Presbyter*) whose Office it was to take the Confession of those

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those sins which persons had committed Part 3.
after *baptism*, and by Prayers, Fastings,
and other Exercises of Mortification, to
prepare them for Absolution. He was a
kind of *Censor morum*, to inquire into the
Lives of *Christians*, to take an account
of their Failures, and to direct and dis-
pose them to repentance. This Office
continued for some hundreds of years,
till it was *abrogated* by *Nectarius* (*S Chry-*
soptom's predecessor in the *See of Constan-*
tinople) upon the occasion of a notorious
scandal that arose about it. A woman
of good rank and quality had been with
the *Penitentiary*, and *confessed* all her sins
committed since Baptism; he enjoyn'd
her to give up her self to Fasting and
Prayer; but not long after she came to
him and *confessed*, that while she was
conversant in the Church to attend up-
on those holy Exercises, she had been
tempted to commit folly and lewdness
with a *Deacon* of the Church, whereup-
on the *Deacon* was immediately cast out;
but the People being exceedingly trou-
bled at the scandal, and the Holy Order
hereby exposed to the scorn and derisi-
on of the *Gentiles*, *Nectarius*, by the ad-
vice of *Eudæmon* a Presbyter of that
Church, wholly took away the Office of
the

Socr. Hist.
Ecccl. l. 5. c.
19. p. 278.
Confer. Soc.
l. 7. c. 16.
p. 726.

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Part 3. the publick *Penitentiary*, leaving every one to the care and liberty of his own Conscience to prepare himself for the holy Sacrament. This account *Sócrates* assures us he had from *Eudemons* own mouth. And *Sozomen* adds, that almost all Bishops followed *Nectarius* his example in abrogating this Office.

But besides the ordinary and standing Office of the Clergy we find even some of the Laity, the *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, that had a considerable hand in *absolving* Penitents, and restoring them to the Communion of the Church. For the *understanding* of which we are to know, that as the *Christians* of those times had a mighty reverence for *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, as the great champions of Religion, so the *Martyrs* took upon them to dispense in extraordinary cases; for it was very customary in times of Persecution for those, who through fear of suffering had lapsed into *Idolatry*, to make their Address to the *Martyrs* in Prison, and to beg peace of them, that they might be restored to the Church; who considering their *petitions*, and weighing the *circumstances* of their case, did frequently grant their requests, mitigate their Penance, and by a *note* signified under

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der their Hands signifie what they had Part 3.

done to the Bishop, who taking an account of their condition, absolved and admitted them to Communion. Of these *Libelli*, or Books granted by the *Martyrs* to the *lapsed*, there is mention in *Cyprian* at every turn who complains they were come to that excessive number, that *thousands* were granted almost *every day*.

Ep. 10, 11,
12. & *alii*

This many of them took upon them to do with great smartness and authority, *Ep. 14.*
p. 27.

and without that *respect* that was due to the Bishops, as appears from the *note* written to *Cyprian* by *Lucian* in the *name*

Ep. 16.
p. 29.

of the *Confessors*; which because 'tis but short, and withal shews the form and manner of those *pacifick Libells*, it may not be amiss to set it down; and thus it runs: *All the Confessors to Cyprian the Bishop greeting. Know that we have granted peace to all those, of whom you have had an account what they have done, how they have behaved themselves since the commission of their crimes; and we would that these presents should be by you imparted to the rest of the Bishops. We wish you to maintain peace with the holy Martyrs, Written by Lucian of the Clergy, the Exorcist and Reader being present.* This was looked upon as very peremptory and magisterial, and there-

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Part 3. therefore of this confidence and presumption, and carelesness in promiscuously granting these *letters of peace*, Cyprian not without reason complains in an Epistle to the Clergy of Rome.

Ep. 22.

P. 34.

Besides these Libels granted by the *Martyrs*, there were other *Libelli* granted by *Heathen Magistrates* (of which it may not be impertinent to speak a little) whence the Lapsed that had had them were commonly called *Libellatici*, and they were of several sorts; some writing their Names *in libellis*, in Books, and professing themselves to worship *Jupiter*, *Mars*, and the rest of the Heathen Gods, presented them to the Magistrate; and these did really sacrifice, and pollute not their *souls* onely, but their *hands* and their *lips*, with unlawful Sacrifices, as the Clergy of Rome expresses it in a Letter to S. Cyprian; these were called *Thurificati* and *Sacrificati*, from their having offered Incense and Sacrifices. Somewhat of this nature was that *Libel* that *Pliny* speaks of in his Epistle to the Emperour *Trajan*, presented to him while he was *Proconsul* of *Bithynia*, containing a Catalogue of the names of many, some whereof had been accused to be *Christians* and denied it, others confessed they had been

Ep. 31.

P. 44.

Ad Anto-

nian. ep. 52.

p. 66, 67.

Ep. 97. l. 10

so

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so some years since, but had renounced Part 3.
 it ; all of them adoring the Images of
 the Gods and the Emperours Statue, of-
 fering Sacrifice, and *blaspheming Christ* ;
 and were accordingly dismissed and re-
 leased by him. Others there were who *Ep. 31.*
 did not themselves sign or Present any *P. 44.*
 such *Libels*, but some Heathen Friends
 for them, (and sometimes out of kindness
 they were encouraged to it by the Ma-
 gistrates themselves) and were hereupon
 released out of prison, and had the fa-
 vour not to be urged to sacrifice. Nay, *can. 7.*
Dionysius of *Alexandria* speaks of some *Synod.*
 Masters, who to escape themselves com- *tom. 2.*
 pelled their *servants* to do sacrifice for *p. 2. l. 7. 12.*
 them, to whom he appoints a three years
 Penance for that sinful compliance and
 dissimulation. A third sort there was,
 who finding the edge and keenness of
 their *Judges* was to be taken off with a
 Summ of *money*, freely confessed to them
 that they were Christians and could not
 sacrifice, prayed them to give them a *Li-*
bel of Dismission, for which they would
 give them a suitable Reward. These
 were most properly called *Libellatici* and
Libellati. *Cyprian* acquaints us with the
 manner of their Address to the Heathen
 Magistrate, bringing in such a person

384 Primitive Christianity. Ch. 5.

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p. 44.
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p. 66, 67.
Ep. 97. l. 10

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manner of their Address to the Heathen
Magistrate ; bringing in such a person
B b thus

Part 3. thus speaking for himself: I had both read and learnt from the Sermons of the Bishop, that the Servant of God is not to sacrifice to Idols, nor to worship Images; wherefore that I might not do what was unlawful, having an opportunity of getting a *Libel* offered, (which yet I would not have accepted had it not offered it self) I went to the Magistrate, or caused another to go in my name and tell him, that I was a *Christian*, and that it was not lawfull for me to sacrifice, nor to approach the Altars of the Devils, that therefore I would give him a Reward to excuse me, that I might not be urged to what was unlawful. These, though not altogether so bad as the *Sacrificiati*, yet *Cyprian* charges as guilty of *implicite* Idolatry, having defiled their Consciences with the purchase of these Books, and done that by *consent* which others had actually done.

Annal.
Ecl. ud.
An. CCL-
III. num.
XX. &
Seqq. tom. 2.

I know *Baronius* will needs have it (and boasts that all that had written before him were mistaken in the case) that these *Libellatici* were not exempted from denying Christ, nor gave money to that end; that they onely requested of the Magistrate, that they might not be compelled to offer Sacrifice, that they were

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were ready to deny *Christ*, and were Part 3.
willing to give him a reward to dispense
with them onely so far, and to furnish
them with a *Libel* of Security, and that
they did really deny him before they ob-
tained their *Libel*. But nothing can be
more plain both from this and several
other passages in *Cyprian*, then that they
did not either *publickly* or *privately* sacri-
fice to Idols, or actually deny *Christ*; and
therefore bribed the Magistrate, that
they might not be forced to do what was
unlawful. And hence *Cyprian* argues
them as guilty by their *wills* and *consent*,
and that they had *implicitly* denied *Christ*,
how? by *actually* doing it? No, but by *De Lips*
pretending they had done what others *2. 179.*
were really guilty of. Certainly the *Car-*
dinals mistake arose from a not right un-
derstanding the several sorts of the *Li-*
bellatici, the first whereof (as we have
shewn) did *actually* sacrifice and deny
Christ.

And now having taken this View of
the Severity of Discipline in the Ancient
Church, nothing remains but to *admire*
and *imitate* their Piety and Integrity,
their infinite Hatred of Sin, their Care
and Zeal to keep up that Strictness and
Purity of Manners that had rendred their

Part 3. Religion so Renowned and Triumphant in the World. A Discipline, which how happy were it for the *Christian* world, were it again resettled in its due Power and vigour ! which particularly is the *judgment* and *desire* of our *own Church* concerning the Solemn *Quadragesimal Penances* and *Humiliations* : *In the primitive Church* (sayes the *Preface* to the *Commination*) *there was a godly Discipline, that at the beginning of Lent such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open Penance, and punished in this World, that their Souls might be saved in the Day of the Lord; and that others admonished by their example might be the more afraid to offend. Which said Discipline it is much to be Wish'd might be restored again.*

F I N I S.

A CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX OF THE

Authors Cited in this Book.

According to the Vulgar Computation; with
an Account of the Editions of their Works.

<i>Christian or Ecclesi- astical Writers.</i>	<i>Flour. A.D.</i>	<i>Books.</i>	<i>Editions.</i>
Apostolo- rum } Canones } Constitutiones			} Par. 1618
Clemens Romanus	70	Epist. ad Cor. Opera	Oxon. 1633 Antw. 1634
Dionysius Areopagita		Epistolæ.	Amst. 1646
Ignatius Antiochenus	101	Append. Usher.	Lond. 1647
Polycarpus	130	Epistol.	apud Euseb.
Abdias Babylonius		Histor Apostol.	apud Euseb.
Justinus Martyr	155	Opera.	Par. 1566.
Smyrnenfis Ecclesia	168	Epistol.	Par. 1636
Melito Sardenfis	170	Orat. Apolog.	apud Euseb.
Athenagoras	170	Legat pro Christ.	Par. 1636
Dionysius Corinth. Episc.	172	Epistolæ.	apud Euseb.
Theophilus Antioch.	180	Lib. 3. ad Autolye.	Par. 1636
Tatianus	180	Orat. ad Græcos.	ibid.
		E b 3	He-

<i>Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers.</i>	<i>Flovr. A.D.</i>	<i>Books.</i>	<i>Editions.</i>
Hegeſippus	180	Commentar.	apud Euseb.
Irenæus	184	adv. Hærefes	Par. 1639
Polycrates Ephes. Episc.	197	Epistol.	apud Euseb.
Tertullianus	198	Opera	Par. 1664.
Clemens Alexandrinus	204	Opera	Par. 1641
Minutius Felix	230	Octavius.	Par. 1668
Origines	230	Opera Lat. contra Cels.	Par. 1522 Cant. 1658
Gregorius Neocæſar.	250	Opera	Mogun.
Cyprianus	250	Opera	Par. 1668
Cornelius Papa	250	Epistol.	apud Cypr.
Firmilianus	250	Epistol.	apud Cypr.
Pontius Diaconus	258	Vit. Cypr.	apud Cypr.
Dienysus Alexandrinus	260	Epist.	apud Euseb.
Arnobius	297	adv. Gentes.	Par. 1668.
Lactantius	300	Opera.	L. Bat. 1660
Commodianus	320	Inſtructiones.	Par. 1668
Conſtantine M.	325	Orat. ad SS.	apud Euseb.
		de Præp. Evang.	Par. 1628
Eusebius Cæſarienſis	329	de Hiſtor. Eccl.	Par. 1639
		de locis Hebr.	Par. 1631
		de Chronic.	Amſt. 1638
Athanaſius	350	Opera	Heidel. 1601
Julius Firmicus	350	de Error. Pro ^o Rel.	Par. 1668
Optatus M. levanus	365	de Schiſm. Donat.	Lond. 1633.
Ephraem Syrus	370		
Ambroſius	370	Opera	Baſil. 1567
Baſilius M.	370	Opera	Par. 1637
Gregorius Nazianzenus	370	Opera	Par. 1609
Gregorius Nyſſenus	380	Opera	Par. 1615
Epiphanius	390	Opera edit. Græc.	Baſil. 1544
Palladius	390	Hiſtor. Lauſiac.	Par. 1555
Theophilus Alexandr.	360	Edict. de Theophan.	apud Baſil.
Jo. Chryſoſtomus	400	Opera in N. T.	Par. 1636 Heidelb. 1603
Hieronymus	400	Opera	Baſil. 1553
Aſterius Amaſenus	400	Homi.	apud Phot.
Prudentius	405	Hymni.	Amſt. 1631
Auguſtinus	410	Opera	Baſil. 1569
Innocentius Papa	416	Epist. Decret.	Par. 1635
Paulinus Nolanus	420	Epistol.	inter Orthod.
			Pau-

<i>Christian or Ecclesiastical Writers.</i>	<i>Flour. A.D.</i>	<i>Books.</i>	<i>Editions.</i>
Paulinus Presbyter	420	Vit. Ambr.	apud Ambr.
Severus Sulpitius	420	Hist. Sacr.	L. Bat. 1635
Maximus Taurinensis	420	Homil.	Lugd. 1633
Philostorgius	425	Hist. Eccl.	Genev. 1643
Orosius	425	adv. Paganos	Col. 1561
Possidius	430	Vit. Aug.	apud Aug.
Isidorus Pelusiotæ	430	Epist.	Heidelb. 1605
Jo. Cassianus	440	de Instit. Monach.	Lugd. 1574.
Socrates	440	Hist. Eccl.	Par. 1668
Sozomenus }			
Theodoretus	440	{ Hist. Eccl. Hist. Relig. de Cur. Græc. Aff.	Gen. 1612 Par. 1555 Heidelb. 1592
Eucherius Lugdunensis	440	Mart. Theb. Leg.	apud Sur.
Sidonius Apollinaris	486	Epist.	Hanov. 1617.
Victor Uvicensis	490	de persec. Vand.	Par. 1569
Jo. Malela	600	Chronic.	apud Usser.
Gregorius M.	600	Dialogi.	Col. 1610
Photius	858	{ Bibliothec. Nomocan.	Rothom. 1653 Par. 1615
Ado Viennensis	870	Martyrolog.	apud Sur.
Suidas	880	Lexic.	Gen. 1618.
Gregorius Presbyter	940	Vit. Naz.	apud Naz.
Simeon Metaphrastes	1030	Vitæ Sanctorum	apud Sur.
Jo. Zonaras	1118	Schol. in Can.	Par. 1618
Const. Harmenopulus	1115	Epitom. Can.	ap. Jus. Gr. Ro.
Alexius Aristenus	1166	Schol. in Can.	in Synodic.
Theodorus Balsamon	1191	Schol. in Can.	in Synodic.
Nicephorus Calistus	1310	Hist. Eccl.	Par. 1630
Matthæus Blastares	1335	Nomocan. Alphab.	Oxon. 1672
Josephus Ægyptius	1390	Paraphras. Arab. Conciliorum	Oxon.
Josephus the Jew	70	Antiquit. Jud.	Gen. 1611

<i>Heathen Writers.</i>	<i>Flor.</i> <i>A.D.</i>	<i>Books.</i>	<i>Editions.</i>
M. Varro			
M. T. Cicero } ante Chr. Nat.			
Jul. Caesar			
C. Tacitus	98		Amst. 1649
Plinius Secundus	100	Epistol.	L. Bat. 1653
Suetonius	110	Vitæ Caesar.	L. Bat. 1651
Brutius, Chronograph.			apud Euseb.
Plutarchus	110	Opera	Par. 1624
Celsus Epicureus	110	Serm. Verus	apud Orig.
Lucianus	110	Opera	Salm. 1618
Galeus	150	Oper. edit. Græc.	Ven. 1525
Arrianus	150	in Epictet.	Cant. 1655
M. Antoninus Imp.	151	de rebus suis	Cant. 1652
Dion. Cassius	224	Hist. Rom.	Hanov. 1606
Ulpianus J. C.	230	de Offic. Procon.	In Digest.
Porphyrius	280	de Abstinent.	Cant. 1655
Lampridius	290	Vit. Alex. Sev. }	Hist. August.
Vulcatius Gallicanus	290	Vit. Avid. Coss. }	L. Bat. 1661
Julianus Imp.	361	Opera	Par. 1630
Eutropius	364	Hist. Rom.	int. Script. H.
			Aug. 1568
Eunapius	370	de Vit. Philosoph.	Gen. 1616
Libanius	370	Orationes	Par. 1627
Amianus Marcellinus	370	Hist. Rom.	inter H. Aug.
			Script. 1568
Vegetius	370	de re Milit.	Wesel. 1670
Symmachus	380	Epistolæ	Lugd. 1598
Zosimus	410	Histor. Nov.	ad calc. Hero.
			Lugd. 1611
Macrobius	422	Saturnal.	L. Bat. 1628
Simplicius	530	Com. in Epict.	L. Bat. 1640

<i>Councils</i>	<i>Hol'd'n A.D.</i>	<i>Council's</i>	<i>Hol'd'n A.D.</i>
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Laodiceum	365	Agathense	505
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Carthaginense III.	398	Rituale	
Carthaginense IV.	400	Manologium	} Græcorum.
Ephefinum Generale III.	431	Euchologium	

*Roman Emperors, whose Laws
and Edicts are cited in this Book.*

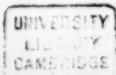
Began their Reigns A. D.

Nero	54
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Maximinus	
Licinius	
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Constantius	337
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Valentinianus	363
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Gratianus	375
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Arcadius	383
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Theodosius junior	408
Anastasius	491
Justinianus	527
Carolus Magnus	802

Late Writers.

R. Bellarminus
Cæsar Baronius
Ant. Galonius
Gabr. Albaspinus
Jan. Gruterus
If. Casaubonus
Nic. Fuller
Jof. Mede
Nic. Rigaltius
Onuphrius Panvinius
Desid. Heraldus
Edw. Breerwood
Joan. Gronovius
Cl. Salmafius
J. G. Voffius.
Jac. Gothofredus
Leo Allatius
Paulus Aringhius
Joan. Fronto
Joan. Forbes
Archbishop Usher
Bishop Taylor
Dr. Hammond
Herb. Thorndike
Mr. Daillé.

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Dr. *Cave's* Lives of the Primitive Fathers, in
2. Vollumes.

Dr. *Cary's* Chronological Account of Ancient
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Wanley's Wonders of the little World, or Histo-
ry of Man.

Sir *Tbo. Herbert's* Travels into *Persia*, &c.

Holyoak's large Dictionary, Latin and English.

Sir *Richard Baker's* Chronicle of *England*.

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Bishop *Wilkins's* real Character, or Philosophi-
cal Language.

*Pharmacopæia Regalis Collegii Medicorum Londi-
nensis.*

Herodoti Historia, Græc. Lat.

Judge *Jones's* Reports in Common Law.

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Hobbes's Leviathan.

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Sir *William Dugdale's* Baronage of *Eng.* in 2 vol.

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Isaac Ambrose's his Works.

Josephus

ol.

his